



# Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israel suing Saddam?

Israel is collecting documents to support a potential legal case against Saddam Hussein. The documents, ordered by Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein, pertain to the damage Israel suffered from missiles fired by Iraq during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Israel Radio reported. Saddam may be tried by an Iraqi council with U.S. supervision.

Earlier, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said, "I think it would be proper for Israel to be involved in legal proceedings," Mofaz said, according to a spokesman. Mofaz said Saddam had also assisted terrorism by giving more than \$35 million to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers.

### Bush signs Syria act

President Bush signed into law a bill that imposes sanctions on Syria unless it cracks down on terrorism. The Syria Accountability Act, which Bush signed last Friday night, imposes trade sanctions on Syria and offers the president a range of other possible punitive measures unless Syria shuts down the local operations of terrorist groups, restores sovereignty to Lebanon and accounts for Syria's nonconventional weapons capability.

At the White House's insistence, the bill allows the president to suspend its stipulations every six months for reasons of national security. The bill's main sponsor, Rep. Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.), called on Bush to impose sanctions immediately.

### Jewish dating behavior eyed

Nearly half of college-aged Jews have one non-Jewish parent and don't exclusively date Jews.

Those are among the findings from the latest National Jewish Population Survey about Jews ages 18 to 29, presented Sunday to officials of Hillel, who were meeting for a professional staff conference in Princeton, N.J. The NJPS 2000-01 showed dating and social patterns differing, sometimes dramatically, between students who have one or two Jewish parents.

While the report shows that less than 1 percent of students with only one Jewish parent exclusively date Jews, 36 percent of those with two Jewish parents date only Jews. According to the NJPS, 48 percent of college-aged Jewish students have two Jewish parents, 45 percent have one Jewish parent and 7 percent said neither parent was Jewish.

### SADDAM SUCCUMBS

## Saddam's fall could benefit Israel, but for now it is only the first step

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israelis have a long score to settle with Saddam Hussein: The former Iraqi dictator promised to destroy the Jewish state, fired 39 Scud missiles at Israeli cities during the Persian Gulf War and paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to families of Palestinian suicide bombers.

So, not surprisingly, Israelis were jubilant at Sunday's news of Saddam's capture by American forces in Iraq, a mood reflected by the Tel Aviv stock exchange, which rose more than 3 percent on the day.

But seasoned Israeli analysts are less euphoric. While acknowledging a best-case scenario in which Saddam's capture spurs the Israeli-Palestinian peace track, puts pressure on Syria to seek a peace agreement and enhances Israel's strategic position in the region, they say that much still has to happen in Iraq for that scenario to materialize.

The key question, they say, is whether Saddam's capture leads to a significant reduction in the number of guerrilla attacks on U.S. and allied forces and leads to a more stable, pro-American Iraqi regime.

If that happens, the benefits for Israel could be enormous. But if the attrition and chaos continue, the positive impact of Saddam's capture could dissipate quickly.

On the face of it, Saddam's final, ignominious exit should put more pressure on the Palestinians to seek an accommodation with Israel.

The radical Arab forces pressing the Palestinians to reject all peace offers have been weakened, and Saddam's capture further reduces the radical hinterland Palestinian hard-liners look to for support.

Conversely, it strengthens America's regional standing and adds weight to the U.S.-sponsored "road map" for Israeli-Palestinian peace.

In the Ma'ariv newspaper, analyst Ben Caspit wrote that there is an Israeli establishment assessment that "the removal of Saddam from the catalogue of burning problems will release new energy in America's involvement here."

Caspit assumes that the road map will be strengthened, Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon will be forced to deal with each other, and Sharon's putative unilateral steps on determining the contours of a Israel's border with the Palestinians will be deferred.

But will the Americans, still embroiled in Iraq, have the resolve to exploit the moment to pressure both Palestinians and Israelis to move forward? Israeli Cabinet ministers think not.

On the contrary, they expect American pressure on Israel to ease. Public Security Minister Tzachi Hanegbi, for example, believes the United States now will be "far more confident in carrying out its campaign against the 'Axis of Evil,'" and give Israel more leeway in fighting terror.

Any reduction of American pressure would be a problem, said analyst Yossi Alpher, co-editor of the Israeli-Palestinian Bitterlemons.org Web site and a former senior Mossad operative.

In Alpher's view, the capture of Saddam will only move the Israeli-Palestinian track forward if President Bush follows it up by "knocking some heads together" on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide.

"But," says Alpher, "this is not the direction we are moving in. On the contrary, we are moving toward low-level crisis management throughout the U.S. election period and

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Palestinian gunmen back Saddam

Palestinian gunmen in the Gaza Strip demonstrated in support of Saddam Hussein, firing their guns into the air. "The Americans may have captured you, but you captured our hearts," an organizer of the rally said through a megaphone.

The rally included gunmen from the Al-Aksa Brigade and the pro-Iraqi Arab Liberation Front. Meanwhile, Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat remained silent on Saddam's capture.

### Two infiltrators killed

Israeli troops killed two Palestinians who tried to sneak into Israel from the Gaza Strip. Several Palestinians were intercepted climbing over the boundary fence Monday morning.

In addition to the two men killed, another Palestinian was arrested and at least three others fled into Israeli territory. It was unclear whether the men meant to pick up explosives inside Israel to carry out terrorist attacks or merely were seeking work, Ha'aretz reported.

Israel's open-fire regulations allow troops to presume border infiltrators are potential terrorists, but many Palestinians desperate for income also try to cross into Israel.

### West Bank outpost dismantled

Soldiers and settlers scuffled as Israel dismantled an illegal settlement outpost in the West Bank.

Monday's razing of the single hut marking Havat Shaked, near Nablus, followed Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz's undertaking this month to move against some 100 unauthorized outposts, as required by the "road map" peace plan.

A Foreign Ministry memorandum leaked to the media last month accused Israel's government of flouting the plan by turning a blind eye to the creation of new Jewish outposts on West Bank hilltops.



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throughout the crisis in Iraq — and the U.S. is still facing a crisis in Iraq."

Writing in Yediot Achronot, analyst Nahum Barnea doubted whether Sharon will exploit the American success to take the initiative on the Palestinian track.

"What can Sharon learn from Bush's achievement?" he asked. "First, that he who dares, wins. He sets the agenda. Sharon has known this truth for 50 years. But knowledge is one thing, action another: The chasm is deep and the feet are heavy. He wants to, but it's not easy for him."

In congratulating President Bush, Sharon suggested that Saddam's capture could herald the beginning of the end for dictatorships throughout the Middle East, with major strategic benefits for Israel.

In a veiled allusion to neighboring Syria, Sharon said. "The dictatorships, and especially those tainted by terror, learned an historic lesson today: The enlightened international community showed that it can defend freedom and defeat terror when it has to."

But the analysts have their doubts. They are skeptical about the chances of a democratic Iraq emerging from the chaos, let alone setting off a domino effect of democratization across the region.

Yediot Achronot's Alex Fishman wrote that "Saddam's capture is not an earthquake, not in Iraq and certainly not in the Middle East. Its impact on our regional conflict is marginal, at most."

Alpher said he assumes that Saddam's capture will not have an appreciable impact on the terrorist attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq.

"After watching Saddam on television, my initial sense is that he has been in deep hiding and that he could not have been a major moving force in the guerilla attacks," Alpher said. "And we all know that a good portion of the elements fighting the Americans in Iraq today have nothing to do with Saddam and the Baath party."

Alpher pointed out that the Sunni Muslims who have ruled Iraq for 13 centuries are a minority and, even without Saddam to egg them on, they fear that American-style democracy would lead to their removal from power — reason enough to continue a rearguard action to resist democracy.

"It takes a stretch of the imagination that Saddam's capture is going to put the democratic domino effect back on track," Alpher said. "That I don't see happening."

Still, Alpher says he sees major short-term strategic gains for America and Israel. Saddam's capture dramatically enhances America's credibility in the region, and that, he says, "is a boost for American deterrence and, by association, for Israeli deterrence too."

If, despite the expert assessments, the United States is able, within a year or so, to put into place a genuine, functioning democracy in Iraq, that would send a very important message across the Middle East.

There's even an outside chance that a pro-American Iraq might even seek relations with Israel.

And that, in turn, would be certain to impact on Bashar Assad's Syria.

In a recent New York Times interview, Assad spoke of peace with Israel as a strategic choice his father had made, and one he intended to pursue.

A democratic Iraq, at peace with Israel, would give him added incentive.

But, say the experts, capturing Saddam is only one necessary step in that direction. There is still a long way to go. □

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

## Palestinians to up status?

NEW YORK (JTA) — A resolution to upgrade the status of Palestinians from permanent U.N. observers to the official representatives of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is being discussed among the Non-Aligned Movement, a group of developing countries. The move comes after the Palestinians failed in an attempt to make pre-1967 Israel the state recognized by the United Nations, said Arye Mekel, Israel's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations.

For its part, Israel is trying to show countries why the Palestinians latest suggestion would be "a very dangerous precedent," Mekel said. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Dean: Mideast policy 'failed'

Howard Dean said President Bush's Israeli-Palestinian policy has "completely failed."

In a foreign policy speech Monday at the Pacific Council in Los Angeles, the Democratic presidential candidate said the Palestinians have a "unique opportunity to have a democracy." He said that while he does not agree with all aspects of alternative peace proposals being offered by Israelis and Palestinians, he is encouraged by their efforts because the Bush administration's "road map" peace plan has failed.

### Anti-anti-Semitism drive

The World Jewish Congress is mounting a petition drive for a U.N. resolution condemning anti-Semitism. The goal is to resurrect an Irish resolution condemning anti-Semitism, which was withdrawn recently when it appeared it wouldn't garner sufficient support.

"We are going to be single-minded in demanding that this resolution, for symbolic reasons, be adopted," Elan Steinberg, the WJC's executive vice president, told JTA.

The petition is part of an international action plan against anti-Semitism adopted Monday at a meeting of the WJC executive board in New York. The group hopes to get 1 million signatures from members of 88 Jewish communities worldwide, asking their governments to support the U.N. resolution. WJC President Edgar Bronfman plans to present the proposed resolution at a meeting in late April of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

### Canadian Hamas suspect in court

A Canadian Palestinian affiliated with Hamas was charged in Israel with planning to assassinate Jews abroad.

Jamal Akal, who was born in Gaza, was charged in Erez Military Court on Monday with conspiracy to commit murder and consorting with terrorists, charges that could carry a 10-year sentence. Israeli officials said he had planned to murder North American Jews and visiting Israeli officials on behalf of Hamas.

His lawyers said Akal, who was arrested last month after a visit to his hometown of Nusseirat, confessed under duress from Israel's Shin Bet security service.

### Looking for Nazi criminals

Advertisements will begin running in Austria this week for a campaign aimed at finding Nazi-era war criminals. The Simon Wiesenthal Center's "Operation: Last Chance," which began last year in the Baltic states, offers financial rewards for information on suspected war criminals from World War II.

Ads will be launched in Poland and Romania in coming weeks.

## A tale of two Jewish U.S. soldiers: A commander and a Rhodes Scholar

By Joe Berkofsky

NEW YORK (JTA) — As he sped north to Baghdad on March 22, Lt. Col. Scott Rutter was looking for signs of ancient Babylonian Jewry.

But there was no time.

That's because Rutter, 41, was leading nearly 900 soldiers driving 150 vehicles, including 14 M-1 battle tanks and 30 Bradley Fighting Vehicles, as they shot northward from Kuwait to Iraq's capital city during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Our focus," Rutter said, "was on direct combat."

As commander of one of the lead forces into Iraq — the 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Infantry Division — known as the 2-7 — Rutter was one of the most senior Jewish officers in Iraq, alongside 300 Jews amid 130,000 troops in the Gulf.

Rutter is one of two Jewish soldiers who talked to JTA recently about the fighting in Iraq. A veteran soldier, Rutter recently returned from Iraq and last month retired from the service. 2nd Lt. Daniel Helmer, 22, a recent graduate of West Point, just won a Rhodes Scholarship and is awaiting orders to get shipped off to Iraq.

It remains rare for a Jew to rise as high as Rutter in the military's ranks.

On April 3, Rutter and the 2-7 captured Saddam Hussein International Airport in a bloody and decisive battle against the Republican Guard. He quickly renamed the facility Baghdad International Airport. "I knew there was a George Bush Airport in Houston, so I couldn't name it that," he said.

Rutter was no stranger to Iraq. A veteran company commander of the first Gulf War who had won a Bronze Star for valor and heroism in ground combat, Rutter won a Silver Star in combat this year in Iraq. His victories did not come easily. Rutter's company lost 10 soldiers, and more than 35 were badly injured.

Rutter said his faith in the ongoing operation in Iraq and the war on terrorism generally will not waver, calling the attacks of Sept. 11 the Pearl Harbor of the current generation of troops.

When an Iraqi sniper killed one of his soldiers and a suicide car bomber killed four more on the same day, Rutter said he told his forces, "We're not animals. We're in this to protect our country and the world."

A Philadelphia native and 1983 military graduate of North Carolina's Campbell University, Rutter retired Nov. 1 after 20 years in the military in order to spend more time with his wife and two young sons. Since then, he's begun lecturing at colleges and synagogues and is even considering a run for Congress.

While Rutter settles into civilian life, Helmer is gearing up to get shipped off to Iraq.

Stationed in Ft. Knox, Ky., Helmer, who one Jewish official termed a "Tom Cruise look-alike," just last month learned he was among 32 Rhodes Scholars selected to study at Britain's Oxford University for 2004. But he may have to defer those plans.

The grandson of Holocaust survivors, Helmer grew up in Haddonfield, N.J. His Israeli-born father is an attorney, and his mother is a physician.

Helmer traces his Jewish military heritage to his paternal grandfather, who fought with the British Army before becoming a company commander in Israel's nascent army during the 1948 War of Independence.

"I decided, based on my family history, that I had an obligation to serve," Helmer said. "My family came to America and not only survived, but thrived."

At the U.S. Military Academy, Helmer stood out among the cadets. He studied military history and Arabic, was president of the academy's Hillel, and organized the academy's first Jewish Warrior Weekend, which explored Jewish ties to the military.

"Jews don't understand that military service is derived from the idea of *tikkun olam*," or repairing the world, Helmer said.

At the Jewish Warrior Weekend, some of Helmer's peers asked him why a Jew would join the U.S. armed forces rather than the Israeli army.

"This is my country," Helmer said. "My freedom to be a Jew without being persecuted is contingent in many ways upon the sacrifices of American soldiers, many of whom have been Jewish." □

## AMERICA DECIDES 2004

**Lieberman urges Jews not to fear supporting his bid for presidency**

By Michael S. Arnold

NEW YORK (JTA) — With Howard Dean solidifying his status as the front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination, Sen. Joseph Lieberman urged Jews who might be worried about putting a Jew in the White House to “stand tall” and give him their vote.

Lieberman (D-Conn.) said on a conference call last Friday, which was co-sponsored by the American Jewish Press Association and JTA, that Jewish voters shouldn't support him simply because of his religion, but also shouldn't oppose him for that reason.

Some Jews worry that electing a Jew as president could result in an anti-Semitic backlash if the president's policies prove unpopular.

“We're down to the last several weeks before the New Hampshire primaries,” Lieberman told the reporters and editors on the conference call. “I've had wonderful support from the Jewish community, but it's clear that some people have been holding back” because “they're anxious. Stand tall as proud Americans, and if you want to support me, come out and support me.”

“If not now, when?” he said, quoting Hillel's famous dictum.

Campaign officials did not return calls last Friday requesting a clarification of the comments, and it's unclear whether the pitch will be backed up by a new fund-raising effort in the Jewish community. Some of Lieberman's campaign activities already have focused on seeking dollars from the Jewish community.

Lieberman's appeal comes at the end of a week that saw his campaign suffer a high-profile setback when Al Gore, Lieberman's running mate in 2000, endorsed Dean, the former Vermont governor, who is leading in polls in New Hampshire.

The move was considered an affront to Lieberman, who had delayed his candidacy out of respect for the former vice president until after Gore announced that he wouldn't run in 2004.

It also was widely seen as further confirmation that Dean, one of the most liberal of the Democratic candidates, is pulling away from the field.

Lieberman said this week that Gore's endorsement actually aided the Lieberman campaign by angering and motivating his supporters and increasing donations.

But the pitch to the Jewish community has little to do with the endorsement, analysts say, and is more about Lieberman's frustration with his poor fund raising among Jewish donors — many of whom have backed other candidates.

“I think he feels hurt that he is being discriminated against by Jews because he is Jewish,” said Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League.

Lieberman's fund-raising dollars place him in the middle of the pack of Democratic hopefuls, but he has not galvanized substantial support in New Hampshire.

The latest poll shows Lieberman in fourth place, with 6 percent of the vote. He trails Dean, who has 35 percent; Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), with 12 percent; and Gen. Wesley Clark, who has 10 percent. The poll, by WHDH-TV in Boston, has a 4.9 percent margin of error.

The New Hampshire primary, the country's first, is Jan. 27.

Many Jews in New Hampshire say they find Lieberman's

policy positions — on issues like charitable choice and the war in Iraq — too conservative.

On the conference call, Lieberman addressed the Gore endorsement obliquely, admitting that it had been “an important week” in the campaign.

“I do believe that as a result of the events of this week, the choice in the campaign becomes more clear,” he said. “Are we going to build on the transformation Bill Clinton brought to the White House so successfully,” which Lieberman said he is best positioned to carry forward, or are Democrats “going to go back to where we were before Bill Clinton, when we didn't command the trust of voters?”

The Democrats' best hope of winning the White House lies in attracting centrist voters, Lieberman said. He warned that Dean's positions, which appeal to the party's left wing, are far too liberal.

“Just like a bird can't fly with one wing, we can't fly with one wing,” Lieberman said.

Dean's adviser on Jewish affairs and outreach, Matthew Dorf, told JTA, “These attacks misrepresent Gov. Dean's experience and his positions and serve to benefit only one person — George Bush.”

“It's time for all Democratic candidates to stop the name-calling and these attacks that misrepresent Gov. Dean's record and positions and remember that this election is about beating President Bush and electing a candidate who has the record to do that.”

Lieberman also hammered away at Dean's foreign-policy positions, including his opposition to the war in Iraq and his controversial statement that the United States should be more even-handed when it comes to Israel and the Palestinians.

Many Jews took that as a call for the United States to moderate its traditional support of Israel. Dean later retracted the remark and repeatedly has pledged his support for the Jewish state.

The “danger” of Dean's candidacy is that it “sends a message of weakness and inexperience on foreign and defense policy generally, and we live in a dangerous world,” Lieberman said. “Some of the things Dean has said have been very troubling and inconsistent with a half-century of U.S. foreign policy.”

Steve Rabinowitz, a Democratic media strategist whose business partner heads Dean's outreach to the Jewish community, said Lieberman's appeal to Jews was appropriate.

“This doesn't offend me,” he said. “They've always played the Jewish card with the Jews.”

Rabinowitz said a push at this stage could draw Jews who may have been dragging their feet to support Lieberman, or who may not support his policies but view him favorably.

But analysts said new Jewish support wouldn't boost Lieberman's war chest enough to change his standing in the race.

“He's saying, ‘If you're ever going to help me, and even if you already have, I need it right now,’” Rabinowitz said.

One Jewish political insider said Lieberman's appeal showed the strain his campaign is under.

“This is the point where the guys who are having the problems in the polls really feel the pressure,” said the insider, who spoke on condition of anonymity. “They are trying to squeeze out money to make them viable for the first round of primaries.”

But Rabinowitz said Jewish voters might not mind the implication that Lieberman's campaign is struggling. “Nobody buys a stock that's tanking, but to some givers there's an emotional response, too,” he said. “Ethnic politics are a little different.” □

(JTA staff writer Matthew E. Berger in Washington contributed to this story.)