

IN THE NEWS

Israeli raid kills nine people

Israeli soldiers hunting mortar crews in the Gaza Strip killed five terrorists and four bystanders.

Witnesses said an armored column set out from the Netzarim army base before dawn Wednesday and came under fire from Palestinian gunmen as it approached the outskirts of Gaza City.

The five gunmen killed are believed to have been members of Islamic Jihad.

Four other Palestinians, including three laborers en route to work, died in the shootout.

Prisoner swap gets legal go-ahead

An Israeli court rejected petitions filed by terror victims groups against Israel's prisoner swap with Hezbollah.

The court did not give its reasons for ruling against the petitions.

The ruling gives the go-ahead for Thursday's swap, in which 435 Arab security prisoners will be traded for an Israeli businessman and the bodies of three Israeli soldiers kidnapped in 2000 by Hezbollah.

U.S. to join Israel at Hague hearing

The United States will side with Israel at a hearing next month at The Hague on the West Bank security barrier.

The Bush administration overcame its reluctance to defend the fence, which it has criticized, and will submit a brief on Israel's behalf at the International Court of Justice.

The United States says it is doing so principally because it believes that holding such a case while the fence is still a matter of negotiation is inappropriate.

"This is the wrong way and the wrong time to proceed on this issue," an administration official said Wednesday.

The U.S. government also will note its reservations about the barrier.

WORLD REPORT

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Lieberman heads south and west for last chance, but all eyes on Kerry

By MATTHEW E. BERGER

MANCHESTER, N.H. (JTA) — Now that the race for the Democratic nomination for president is moving south and west, Jewish scrutiny of the candidates is likely to intensify.

Sen. John Kerry (D.-Mass.) who won New Hampshire with a healthy margin, was propelled forward with his second win in two weeks. He has enjoyed solid Jewish support until now — he won most Jewish votes in Iowa last week — and that support is likely to increase. So, too, is scrutiny of his policy positions.

History's first viable Jewish candidate for president, Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), is heading for a test he has said will make him or break him. Lieberman, who came in fifth in New Hampshire, says he needs to win at least one of the seven primary and caucus states Feb. 3 in order to stay in the game.

Lieberman captured 9 percent of the vote in the election season's first official primary.

Kerry won Tuesday's primary with 38 percent of votes. Dean, the former Vermont governor who was once the front-runner in New Hampshire, came in second with 26 percent.

Lieberman had been locked in a tight battle for third place with Gen. Wesley Clark and Sen. John Edwards (D-N.C.), who each received 12 percent of the vote.

An exit poll suggested that among New Hampshire Jews, Kerry, Clark and Lieberman finished in a dead heat. Dean trailed, and Edwards hardly made a showing.

Kerry is a skilled campaigner, peppering his speeches with emotive anecdotes tailored to every group he addresses.

That talent won him overwhelming support among Iowa's Jews, who had been thrilled to hear him shout "Am Israel Chai!" at a synagogue event in November. Now his policies will come under closer examination.

Kerry is a solid Israel supporter and supports the isolation of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, but those close to him say he has little patience for Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He has emphasized the need to bring Saudi Arabia to account for peddling anti-Semitism.

Steve Rabinowitz, a Washington adviser to Democrats and to the Jewish community, says Kerry is likelier now to attract Jewish money.

"It tends to go to the front-runner anyway, and Kerry is playing well in the community. He's got

a history in the community and people are comfortable with him," Rabinowitz said. He predicted Kerry would be the front-runner for Jewish givers, followed by Clark, who has the support of Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D.-Ill.), a top Jewish fund-raiser for Bill Clinton in his successful 1992 presidential bid.

Kerry already has significant Jewish backing in his home state. Alan Solomont, a leading philanthropist in the community, is Kerry's top fund-raiser in Massachusetts.

"He regards the relationship with Israel as special and in U.S. interests because it is the only democracy in the region," said Solomont, who also is active in the Israel Policy Forum. "At the same time, he believes the United States has a very important role to play in trying to assist Israel in ending the conflict. The current administration is a lot of talk and not a lot of action."

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**AMERICA
DECIDES
2004**

■ Lieberman and the rest of the pack look ahead, but all eyes are on Kerry

Continued from page 1

Kerry and Dean both have suggested former President Jimmy Carter — not especially beloved among U.S. Jews — as a Middle East envoy. Dean suffered much greater flak, however, because he was the front-runner and had made a number of perceived gaffes about the Arab-Israeli issue.

The fifth-place finish Tuesday for Lieberman placed his candidacy on its last leg, though the campaign pledged to fight at least another week, heading south and west.

Lieberman is banking on the diversity of the states there to allow new voters, especially conservative Democrats, to have a say. The range of those states — and the shift away from New England, home turf for Kerry and Dean — means Lieberman can exploit his name recognition from the 2000 vice presidential nomination to get a leg up.

■ Lieberman told supporters Tuesday that campaign organizers in the seven states with primaries and caucuses next week wanted him to “carry this fight to our states.” He said, “The battle goes on with the confidence that I am ready to be the president America needs now.”

Among the states going to the polls next week are Arizona, which has 81,500 Jews, and Missouri, which has 62,500 Jews, according to the American Jewish Year Book.

That may not be significant for Lieberman's candidacy, as Jews have shown that they do not necessarily vote for Jews if

they find other candidates equally or more favorable.

Lieberman campaign officials feel they have the chance to win at least one state outright Feb. 3 — when South Carolina, New Mexico, North Dakota, Missouri and Delaware also vote. Lieberman currently is leading in the polls in Delaware.

Lieberman's acknowledgment that he needs to win a state next week is echoed by Democratic National Committee National Chairman Terry McAuliffe, who repeatedly has said that any candidate who has not won a state by that time should drop out.

Lieberman pitched a positive spin on the New Hampshire finish Tuesday, claiming he was in a three-way tie for third place. Lieberman had campaigned heavily in New Hampshire, choosing to skip the Iowa caucus and even renting an apartment in New Hampshire's largest city, where he watched the returns Tuesday.

In the days before the primary, Lieberman claimed he would do better than expected, in part because of the state's high number of independents, who can vote in the party primary.

After his fifth-place showing, campaign officials turned to next week's contests as the key determinant of Lieberman's viability.

“What's happening now and what's been happening is totally consistent with what we expected,” a campaign official said.

■ Lieberman was furious with his treatment in the media. Several media outlets — including the New York Times and USA Today — characterized New Hampshire as a four-person race, running front-page photos of the other four major contenders, without Lieberman.

“The national news media put four of the candidates on their front pages. Not me,” Lieberman said. “Today the people of New Hampshire put me in the ring, and that's where we're going to stay.”

For several months, the seven presidential candidates have focused their attention in large part on the Granite State, giving Jews there ample opportunities to gauge the contenders and choose their favorite.

Not that courting the state's 10,000 Jews was a priority.

None of the candidates made an appearance at the annual “Deli Night” Saturday night at Temple Adath Yeshurun in Manchester. The organizers had moved the event a month earlier because of the political season, and even invited President Bush to attend. Bush's father came 12 years ago when he was the incumbent president running for re-election.

Jews here had many opportunities to see the candidates up close, and like their fellow citizens in New Hampshire, many waited to the last minute before backing a candidate.

Many also said they chose the candidate they

believed could best defeat President Bush in November.

Abby Cooper, a social worker in Portsmouth, said she wanted to vote for Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio), but cast her ballot for former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean.

“The idea of having Bush for four more years made me compromise my values,” Cooper said.

Jews who backed Lieberman insisted their shared religion was not a factor.

“It has nothing to do with the fact that he's Jewish,” said Moshe Shpindler, a restaurateur in Manchester who was born in Israel. “He's really straightforward and honest.”

On the Saturday before the primary in Manchester, Shpindler prayed with Lieberman at the home of Manchester's Lubavitch rabbi.

Several Jews who supported other candidates said they had considered Lieberman but didn't think he could win the Democratic nomination or defeat President Bush in November.

Adam Solendar, executive director of the Jewish Federation for Greater Manchester, said Tuesday he had spoken to several Jews who planned to pick either Dean or Kerry, but then cast their ballot for Lieberman.

Solendar said they all decided in the end that they should not exclude Lieberman because he was Jewish, and they determined his views were the closest to theirs. ■

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Lieberman campaign official

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Federation may be dropped over dues

By RACHEL POMERANCE

NEW YORK (JTA) — A Virginia federation is trying to avert becoming the first federation to be ousted from the United Jewish Communities, but it is not yet clear whether it will succeed.

In a news release issued Monday, the umbrella group for North American Jewish federations said it was ousting the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater, Va., due to its "continuing delinquency" on paying its UJC dues.

But after learning from Tidewater that it may make good on its dues, UJC is giving Tidewater more time before it severs ties with the federation, UJC's president, Stephen Hoffman, told JTA.

"It seems to have been a miscommunication," said Harry Graber, executive vice president of the Tidewater federation. Graber said he was "shocked" to learn of its ousting through a UJC news release.

Tidewater's reluctance to pay its dues represents an extreme case of a local federation expressing its discontent with the UJC. The case is also a test of the UJC's strength and ability to force compliance on collective decisions.

Tensions between the UJC and the Tidewater federation have persisted for more than a year, when the federation decided to hold off on its dues.

Its position, along with that of San Francisco, which had also questioned the dues structure, helped prompt the passage of a UJC resolution last year to oust federations that do not pay their dues.

Now San Francisco is "100 percent" in good standing, Hoffman said, and there is no other federation that has not paid.

For Tidewater, the decision was rooted not in economic hardship, but in its desire to see changes at the UJC.

It has asked the UJC to reduce its budget, which would mean a reduction in the amount of dues local federations pay. It also wants the UJC to boost funding for one of UJC's overseas partners, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and provide Tidewater with better services.

Its dues are roughly \$175,000, or 5 percent of its \$4 million annual fund-raising campaign, Graber said.

"We felt that it was important to have a considerable drop in the amount of funds that are being part of the budget of the UJC, and then subsequently passed on to us," he said.

Tidewater also worries that the JDC, a UJC overseas partner that runs relief and welfare abroad, is not receiving the funding "necessary to meet the needs of Jews around the world." The UJC sends 75 percent of overseas funds raised through the federation system to the Jewish Agency for

Israel and 25 percent to the JDC.

Backers of both agencies fight bitterly to protect or increase their funding.

In Tidewater's case, it has circumvented the system, dividing its overseas funds evenly between the two agencies, and funding each directly. The Tidewater board is slated to make a decision on paying dues next month, Graber told JTA.

But UJC mistook an alleged unreturned phone call to its president for rejection, he said. "In no way did our president ever, ever receive a phone call and fail to respond," he said. "Our silence didn't mean anything other than that we were contemplating the issue. That's where we are now."

Hoffman said that if that is the case, "I feel a little embarrassed, but happy to make amends." He said he hoped it was all just "a terrible mistake." But, he added, the UJC is "not going to wait forever" for a decision.

Graber, who objects to the characterization of his federation as delinquent, said Tidewater has offered to pay the UJC a reduced amount of dues, but UJC said no.

"Our community will pay all the dues that it will owe to the UJC in a timely and prompt manner once the fair share issue is resolved," Graber said.

"This is not an easy road for us," Graber said. "We could have just taken the easy road and just complied with the big players and that would have been it."

Hollywood may think they're Jewish, but they're not

By TOM TUGEND

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — Interviews with Norman Jewison and Michael Caine don't resolve every reservation about "The Statement," but they do yield some interesting items about two movie veterans who grew up Christian in Jewish neighborhoods and often are taken as "Members of the Tribe."

Jewison, 77, grew up in a working-class district in the east end of Toronto with large Jewish and Irish Protestant populations, and he attended a Jewish school.

By virtue of his last name, young Norman often was taunted by the Irish kids as "Jew boy" and "Jewie," and he identified so closely with his Jewish classmates that he asked his parents why they didn't observe the Jewish holidays.

He was crestfallen to learn he was a Methodist, a denomination he laughingly says is made up of "tough, mean-spirited people."

When his hit film, "Fiddler on the Roof," premiered in Jerusalem, Jewison was seated next to then-Prime Minister Golda Meir.

"Everybody naturally assumed that I was Jewish, and Golda kept calling me 'boychik,'" he recalls.

Michael Caine has made some 90 films over a 50-year span, but nowadays he accepts a role only if it's amusing — such as his portrayal of Austin Powers' father — or challenging.

"I decided to play the French Nazi Brossard because his character was the farthest removed from my own," he says. "I don't want anyone to sympathize with Brossard, but I play him as a pathetic and sad man."

"I have also known religious fanatics of all stripes. Whenever one of them says he is willing to die for his religion, what he means is that he's willing to kill for his religion," Caine says.

Born Maurice Micklewhite, Caine grew up in London's heavily Jewish East End, where his cockney father was a fish-market porter and his mother was a cleaning woman. The future actor also attended a Jewish school, where a classmate was future playwright Harold Pinter, and functioned as a Shabbos goy for his Jewish neighbors.

"I went to their homes and lit the fires and earned a sixpence. That was a lot of money to me then," he reminisces.

The Yiddish he picked up in his youth came in handy when Caine started making movies in Hollywood.

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORLD

France beefs up Jewish security

France will provide more than \$18 million to beef up security at Jewish institutions.

Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin announced the package at the second meeting of the newly-created Cabinet committee on anti-Semitism on Tuesday.

France lauded for fighting anti-Semitism

An Israeli Cabinet minister described France as a leader in the fight against anti-Semitism.

Following a meeting with French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy in Paris on Wednesday, Israel's minister for public security, Tzachi Hanegbi, told reporters that France is "the only country in Europe where those guilty of anti-Semitic acts are put in jail," adding, "France is not an anti-Semitic country, on the contrary."

Hanegbi's visit comes a few days after the publication of statistics by the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Israeli government that claimed France was the only country in which anti-Semitic attacks increased in 2003.

On Tuesday, Sarkozy said French government figures showed a drop of almost 40 percent in attacks last year.

Weather kicks soccer game

Only 3,000 people braved cold weather to attend a celebrity soccer game for a Holocaust museum in Rome. Organizers had sold 20,000 tickets for Tuesday night's match.

Among the attendees were Rome's mayor and other dignitaries, including guest of honor Elie Wiesel. The "Match of Memory" — which was broadcast live on state television — was part of events marking Holocaust Remembrance Day in Italy. It pitted teams of entertainment, sports and politicians against each other.

Mahathir calls for tolerance

Malaysia's former prime minister reportedly called for greater tolerance between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Mahathir Mohammed, who before leaving office said Jews "rule the world by proxy" and that the Muslim world must unite to defeat them, said "Muslims should accept other people's religions."

He made his comments at a meeting last week of the Jeddah Economic Forum in Saudi Arabia, Arab News reported.

NORTH AMERICA

Hamas ordered to pay \$116 million

A U.S. judge ordered Hamas to pay \$116 million in damages for killing two Americans in Israel.

Family members of Yaron Ungar and his wife sued Hamas in March 2000 under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1991, which allows relatives of American victims of overseas terrorism to seek damages in U.S. courts. The judge's decision came this week.

Ungar and his wife, Efrat, were killed in a drive-by shooting in 1996 near the Israeli city of Beit Shemesh.

WWII collaborator to go

A U.S. appeals court agreed that a former Nazi collaborator must give up his U.S. citizenship. In making the ruling Tuesday, the court disagreed with Jack Reimer's argument that he was forced to participate in Nazi atrocities during World War II as a guard in Polish ghettos.

Reimer trained as a camp guard at Trawniki, Poland, and was involved in the extermination of Jews throughout Poland, including

those in Warsaw, Lublin and Czestochowa.

"Reimer is one of the most heavily implicated Nazi criminals ever found in the United States," said Eli Rosenbaum of the Office of Special Investigations, the Justice department's Nazi-hunting unit.

Reimer, 84, who has lived in New York, previously was found to have lied about wartime activities when he applied to enter the United States in 1951.

Bush pressed on Polish restitution

Members of the U.S. Congress pressed President Bush to bring up property compensation in his meetings with Poland's leader.

Bush met Polish President Alexander Kwasniewski on Monday, but in remarks and statements later, the White House did not say whether he raised the issue of Jewish properties confiscated by the Nazis and other religious properties confiscated by the Communists.

Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-Colo.) is a co-chairman of a commission that monitors compliance with the Helsinki human rights accords.

Joining in the appeal were commission co-chairman Rep. Christopher Smith (R-N.J.) and Rep. Benjamin Cardin (D-Md.), the commission's ranking Democrat.

Reform supports death penalty review

The Reform movement praised the Supreme Court for agreeing to review the constitutionality of death sentences for crimes committed by juveniles.

The movement opposes the death penalty in general and finds its application to juveniles especially abhorrent.

"The death penalty, especially when applied to our nation's young, debases our penal system and brutalizes our society," said Mark Pelavin, associate director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

The court is reviewing a Missouri court's decision that applying the penalty to crimes committed by juveniles violates the Eighth Amendment, which bans cruel and unusual punishment.

MIDDLE EAST

Was an offer made?

Ariel Sharon denied that his office sought Israeli settlers' agreement to dismantle some illegal West Bank outposts.

The denial by Israel's prime minister came after a spokesman for a settlers' group said the group had rejected the offer.

Sharon is planning to dismantle some settlements as part of a plan to disengage from the Palestinians if peace negotiations do not resume.

Israeli Twin Towers scare

Tel Aviv's Twin Towers were partially evacuated in a bomb scare.

Police ordered shoppers out of the mall in the Azrieli Towers on Wednesday after discovering a bomb in the underground parking lot. The bomb was safely detonated.

There have been several alerts of terrorist plots against the Azrieli Towers modeled on the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York.

Terror victims' relatives sue P.A.

Relatives of Israeli victims of a 2002 terrorist attack in Jerusalem sued the Palestinian Authority.

The victims are suing for more than \$90 million.

Eleven people were killed and more than 50 wounded in the blast near a Jerusalem yeshiva where people had gathered for a Bar Mitzvah celebration.