

## IN THE NEWS

## State Dept. team to go to Israel

The U.S. State Department is sending a team of technical experts to Israel to study the question of settlement expansion.

State Department spokesman Adam Ereli refused to comment Tuesday on the Israeli Housing Ministry's plan to build more than 1,000 new units in the West Bank, but said a team would go out in the coming weeks.

This followed Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's order to rescind some previous offers for bids for fear of upsetting the United States, which received an Israeli pledge not to expand settlements under the "road map" peace plan with the Palestinians.

Israel has insisted that the freeze does not apply to established settlements that likely will be incorporated into Israel in any future peace deal.

## Birthright boosted in 2005 draft budget

Israel's 2005 draft budget includes a \$10 million boost for birthright Israel.

The allocation is more than \$9 million higher than government funds put aside last year for the program, despite planned cuts to other areas of the Israeli public sector under the spending package approved Monday by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Cabinet.

## Kotel makes room for unorthodox prayer

A section of the Western Wall in Jerusalem set aside for women's and mixed prayer services was officially inaugurated.

The site, located on a section of the wall next to Robinson's Arch, now home to an archaeological garden, will be used starting Wednesday for all-women's prayer services conducted by the Women of the Wall group.

The site also will be used for mixed services held by Israel's Conservative movement, which has been using the site unofficially for the past five years.

# WORLD REPORT

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## Jews overwhelmingly support Kerry according to a new Democratic poll

By RON KAMPEAS

**W**ASHINGTON (JTA) — Three years of extraordinarily close relations with Israel, tough talk toward the Palestinians and historic decisions favoring the Jewish state have done virtually nothing to build support for President Bush among U.S. Jewish voters, according to new data from a Democratic pollster.

Likely U.S. Jewish voters favor Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) over Bush by 75 percent to 22 percent in the coming presidential election, according to a poll published Monday by the National Jewish Democratic Council.

With a margin of error of 3.5 percentage points, that's a statistical tie with the 19 percent Bush scored among Jewish voters in the 2000 elections, according to exit polls at the time — and bad news for Republicans scrambling for Jewish voters in key swing states like Florida.

"There's been literally no progress in outreach to the Jewish community on the part of the Bush administration and the Bush campaign," said Anna Greenberg of Greenberg Quinlan Rosner, a firm with ties to the Democratic Party. The firm carried out the poll of 817 respondents from July 26-28.

Republicans immediately blasted the results.

"Something smells here," said Matt Brooks, the executive director of the Republican Jewish Coalition. "It's right in the middle of the Democratic convention, that taints it right off the bat. That environment would make it extremely skewed."

Republican spokesmen also said they

would not read too much into the poll, considering the source.

"This is a partisan poll put out by a partisan organization," said Michael Lebovitz, the Bush-Cheney campaign's Jewish outreach official.

Kerry predictably scored much better on domestic issues such as health care, abortion and church and state relations — areas Republicans have all but foregone in their outreach to the Jewish community.

More significantly, Kerry scored higher than Bush on how close respondents felt to each candidate's positions on Israel, the key thrust of the Bush campaign's outreach to Jews. Kerry out-pollled Bush 51 to 24 percent in that respect.

"The Israel issue itself, there was very little traction for Bush on it," Greenberg said.

Greenberg said the polling ended a day before Kerry's acceptance speech at the convention and that media coverage until that point would not have affected voters.

The poll departed from previous methodology by sending e-mail invitations to tens of thousands of respondents selected from a sample of two million Americans purchased from a third-party vendor. The only skewing in the selection was geographic, according to areas where Jews are more likely to live.

Those who responded as being Jewish were invited to continue the poll on the Web.

Previous polls have been launched by searching for Jews on a last-name basis, but Greenberg worried that method would leave out Jews with last names that aren't identifiable Jewish. Other polls also scanned Jewish

*Continued on page 2*

**AMERICA  
DECIDES  
2004**

## ■ *New Democratic poll shows Jews going for Kerry*

*Continued from page 1*

membership lists, she said, which could leave out the unaffiliated.

Her initial broad invitation culled a more reliably random sample, Greenberg suggested.

Traditionalists have shied away from Web polling, noting that by definition it excludes respondents who do not have computers or who do not regularly use the Internet.

Greenberg said such concerns were less relevant as Internet penetration of American homes gradually approaches telephone penetration — especially among Americans with higher incomes and education, a segment generally reflective of Jewish voters.

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Pollsters who in the past have used phone polls to survey the Jewish community said the methodology appeared sound.

They also noted the reliable reputation of the firm, founded by Greenberg's father, Democratic pollster Stanley Greenberg.

"I'm okay with it. I would be among those who defend it," said John Zogby, a top pollster.

Earlier polling had suggested shifts toward Bush. David Harris, executive director of the American Jewish Committee, said Greenberg's poll showed signs of a slide in the other direction.

"This poll suggests that a Kerry tide has emerged," said Harris, "that he's been able to capture the uncertain, undecided voters who didn't know him well."

Harris, who interprets the AJCommit-

tee's polling, said his organization would come out with its own poll next month.

Bush's low ratings in 2000 were attributed at the time to President Clinton's popularity among Jewish voters and to distrust of a candidate whose father was seen as the coolest president toward Israel since the Eisenhower era.

Republicans hoped Bush's record in office would change those perceptions, and indeed for a time it did.

Bush scored high in AJCommittee approval polls after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and — in the first poll matching him against prospective Democratic challengers, late last year — he scored 31 percent against Kerry, approaching Reagan-era numbers.

Bush earned points especially for isolating Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat as terrorism against Israelis intensified during the intifada.

The results left Republicans elated, and they intensified efforts to win over the Jewish vote.

They were helped when Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon spoke highly of Bush in April after the president recognized some Israeli claims to the West Bank and rejected any "right of return" to Israel for Palestinian refugees.

This month, the White House published a glossy, 23-page booklet touting Bush's closeness to the Jewish community.

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Ira Forman, the NJDC's executive director, suggested the administration was banking too hard on the support it culled from Jewish elites, as opposed to rank-and-file voters. That was because the elite gets the most media attention, Forman said.

"You have to think of the Jewish community in concentric circles. In the inner circle, there are some of the folks who are most active in the Jewish community," Forman said. "We hear more of the time from the bull's-eye."

Bush's failure to make an impact also could be attributed in part to Kerry's pro-Israel outreach in recent months: The Democratic Party platform, for instance, repeats Bush's assurances to Israel on the West Bank and refugees.

"The Kerry campaign has been vigorously pursuing Jewish voters and emphasizing Kerry's pro-Israel record," Harris said.

However, the 51-24 gap favoring Kerry on his Israel policies suggests that a majority of American Jews don't favor Bush's backing for Sharon's tough policies, and appreciates Kerry's commitment to multilateralism in international affairs.

Another indicator was that U.S. Jews reflect the growing trend among Americans to perceive the Iraq war as a danger to U.S. interests in the Middle East. For U.S. Jews, that could translate into the belief that Bush means danger

to Israel.

In the Greenberg poll, Kerry consistently trounces Bush on security issues and on Israel — by 66 percent to 34 percent on both Israel and the war on terrorism; and by 71 percent to 29 percent on the Iraq war and on making America stronger.

That marks a striking contrast to Israelis, who overwhelmingly favor Bush over Kerry, according to two recent polls.

That gap may be partly attributed to the fact that U.S. Jews — like other Americans — tend to "vote local."

While Israel is indeed a concern for American Jews, they consistently rank it as a "second-tier" issue, Greenberg said.

Jobs and the economy, terrorism, Iraq, health care, education and Medicare and Social Security all outranked Israel as a matter of concern, according to the poll.

Harris of the AJCommittee cautioned that the poll — while good news for Kerry — was just a snapshot.

"There are nearly three months to go, there's a Republican Party convention, a lot can happen between now and November to shift voters," Harris said. "The Republican Party is not rolling over and playing dead. We're seeing a lot of material from the Republican Party making its case to Jewish voters."

The real winner, Harris suggested, was the Jewish community, assiduously courted by both sides.

"The key for me is that the Jewish vote is still very much in play," he said. "Both parties are making a concerted effort to go after the Jewish vote." ■

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**David Harris**

American Jewish Committee

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# Jews help rebuild after Hurricane Charley

By ALANA B. ELIAS KORNFIELD

NEW YORK (JTA) — Jennifer Ritter says Hurricane Charley felt like a freight train moving through her home.

“You have your adrenaline pumping and fear, and then it is over and you look around you and it is a disaster zone,” said Ritter of Maitland, Fla.

Like thousands of others, Ritter, the associate executive director of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Central Florida, has been living since last Friday’s hurricane amid fallen trees, collapsed transformers, exposed electrical cables and smashed houses.

But Jews throughout Florida are pulling together to help those in need.

“Those with power are hosting those that have severe damages to their homes, to help people get through if they don’t have the means to cook food, do laundry, or things we take for granted,” Ritter said.

The hurricane, which largely affected central Florida, including the cities of Fort Myers and Orlando, ripped northward through the state of Florida with winds gusting up to 140 miles per hour.

Charley, which to date has registered a death toll of 19, was designated a Category 4 hurricane — the second most destruc-

tive type — and was the most harmful hurricane in Florida since Hurricane Andrew struck in 1992.

Karen Coates, the national spokeswoman for the American Red Cross, told JTA that 2,424 homes were destroyed; 1,968 homes suffered major damages and are uninhabitable; and 1,260 have minor damages and are habitable whether or not the habitants choose to remain in them.

Annette Goodman, the executive director of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties, says Temple Shalom, a Reform synagogue in Port Charlotte, Fla., was the synagogue most affected by Charley’s wrath.

The temple’s educational wing was ripped off the main structure, but the chapel remains untouched, she said.

As in most of Charlotte County, electricity had not yet been restored to the temple by midweek.

“We sent a busload of food, towels and toiletries to the community there on Monday,” Goodman said. “There is devastation, but as far as we know the congregation is all right.”

Additionally, the local Jewish Family Services will be providing counseling twice a week at Temple Shalom for at least

a month, as will the temple’s spiritual leader, Rabbi Solomon Agin.

Barry Swartz, the vice president of United Jewish Communities consulting, says the UJC is accepting donations at local federations and at the group’s national mailbox for Jews and non-Jews alike.

“We are working closely with Lee and Charlotte Counties and developing approaches to be helpful to those who were victims of the hurricane,” Swartz said. “Communities who have been through this sort of tragedy always reach out to be helpful and the Jewish Federation of Miami has been great in offering their help.”

Also offering its help is the Chabad of Sarasota, which is currently housing an overnight camp for teenage girls originally held at the Chabad of Fort Myers.

On Sunday night, 60 girls and staff arrived in Sarasota after the Chabad of Fort Myers lost power and water, said Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz at the Chabad of Sarasota. This week members of the community are holding classes in art, magic and pottery for the campers.

In addition, a local chef is offering his services each night to prepare a kosher dinner for the girls, whose kosher food is being kept in the freezers of Sarasota community members.

## What Jews are thinking: NJDC poll on upcoming election

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The National Jewish Democratic Council on Monday released results of a new survey regarding the positions of American Jews on the upcoming presidential elections.

The poll was carried out in late July by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, and has a margin of error of 3.5 percent. Following are a dozen highlights of the findings.

- If the presidential election were held today, 75 percent of respondents said they would vote for Sen. John Kerry (D.-Mass.), with 22 percent saying they would vote for President Bush. In 2000, Al Gore won 79 percent of the Jewish vote to Bush’s 19 percent.

- Some 25 percent approve of Bush’s performance as president, while 75 percent disapprove.

- Asked to identify their two most important concerns in selecting a president, 42 percent listed terrorism/national security and the economy and jobs. Israel came in a distant sixth, with 15 percent calling it one of their most important issues. Also beating out Israel were affordable health care, the situation in Iraq and Social Security and Medicare.

- Fully 95 percent of respondents said they were “almost certain” to vote in the upcoming presidential elections. Another 5 percent said they would “probably” vote.

- 66 percent of respondents believe Kerry is better on Israel

than President Bush, while 34 percent said Bush trumps Kerry when it comes to the Jewish state.

- 66 percent believe Kerry is better on the war on terrorism than President Bush, while 34 percent said Bush is better in the war on terrorism.

- 71 percent are convinced Kerry would be better on the war in Iraq than Bush, while 29 percent said they think Bush is better on Iraq.

- 71 percent think Kerry will make America stronger than Bush will, while 29 percent said they think Bush will make America stronger.

- 71 percent think Kerry would be better at representing the interests of American Jews, while 29 percent said Bush would be better.

- 78 percent of respondents think Kerry is better than Bush on the role of religion in public life and politics, while 22 percent prefer Bush on this issue.

- 77 percent feel that things in the United States have gotten “pretty seriously off on the wrong track,” while 23 percent feel things are going in “the right direction.”

- 76 percent favor civil unions for homosexual couples, while 24 percent said marriage should be recognized only as the union of a man and a woman.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## NORTH AMERICA

### Iran threatens Israel

Iran threatened to destroy the Dimona nuclear reactor if Israel attacks the Islamic republic.

The warning comes amid increasing speculation that Israel might attack Iranian nuclear facilities, and shortly after Iran said it successfully tested an upgraded version of its Shihab-3 missile, which is capable of hitting Israel.

### Art attack on terrorism

Israeli forces distributed a cartoon urging Palestinians to shun terrorists in their midst.

Titled "Terrorism is Killing You," the black-and-white sketch of an Islamist suicide bomber squashing an elderly Palestinian man and a boy in a huge vise was distributed in the West Bank city of Nablus this week, military sources said.

It was the first time Israel has resorted to art in its psychological warfare against Palestinian terrorists. Nablus is a hotbed of extremists, many of whom are hated by the populace for assuming a vigilante role in lieu of the local police force.

### Heavy weapons face Hezbollah

Israel is deploying advanced artillery on its northern border to ward off Hezbollah rocket attacks.

The new Trajectory Correction System has made Israeli artillery along the border with Lebanon accurate enough to strike a target as small as a basketball court, security sources said Tuesday, meaning Hezbollah rocket crews can be struck without harming the Lebanese civilian populace.

The system gives Israeli artillery a reliable range of 25 miles, enough to cover arsenals in southern Lebanon, where the Shiite militia is believed to have stockpiled as many as 12,000 rockets.

## MIDDLE EAST

### Golan Cipel arrives in Israel

The Israeli man who prompted N.J. Gov. James McGreevey's resignation returned to Israel.

Golan Cipel arrived in Tel Aviv on Tuesday and spoke publicly for the first time since McGreevey resigned last week after revealing that he was gay and had had an adulterous homosexual relationship. Sources close to McGreevey pegged Cipel as his paramour and said Cipel had demanded millions of dollars in blackmail.

But Cipel, who says he is heterosexual, has denied an affair and alleges that McGreevey made repeated, unwanted sexual advances.

### Christians pray for Israel

The International Fellowship of Christians is sponsoring its annual day of solidarity with Israel.

On Sunday, Oct. 17, churches are being asked to focus their services on Israel, and Israeli officials will speak at some churches.

### Eugenics proponent running for Congress

A Republican candidate for Congress advocates incorporating eugenics into public policy.

James Hart of Tennessee promises to use eugenics, the pseudo-science that was a precursor to the Holocaust, as the basis for policy proposals if elected.

Favored Races, his political manifesto available on his campaign Web site, mentions Jews but doesn't say which demographic groups would suffer under his proposals. Discussion boards on the site overflow with rejections of eugenics, which encourages selective

breeding. Tennessee's state GOP has denounced Hart's platform and distanced itself from the candidate after failing to place its preferred Republican on the November ballot.

### Jews for Jesus targeting D.C.

Jews for Jesus will bring 600 volunteers to the Washington area to win converts.

The 220,000-member local Jewish community recoiled at the timing and intent of the "Behold Your God" campaign, which begins Saturday and will not end until after Rosh Hashanah. Jewish leaders have held meetings to warn of the missionaries, who will work at area subway stops.

Since 2001, Jews for Jesus' campaign has targeted 38 other metropolitan areas worldwide with Jewish populations larger than 25,000.

### Survivor helps children of slain U.S. soldiers

An American Holocaust survivor is creating a college scholarship fund for children of slain U.S. soldiers.

Retired New Jersey businessman Joseph Ross said he decided to use \$250,000 of his own money to create the fund, which will provide scholarships for study at New Jersey's Ramapo College.

"When I was a survivor, I appreciated the fact that somebody gave me a hand, and I'd like to pay back some of the goodies that this country gave me," said Ross, a Polish-born concentration-camp survivor. "I want Americans to know that we Jews are good citizens and we're not just for Israel and for Jews."

Ross will formally establish the Ross Family Survivor to Survivors Scholarship, which will help children of U.S. soldiers slain in Iraq and Afghanistan, in a ceremony Wednesday.

## WORLD

### Olympics ban wanted

Jewish groups called on the International Olympic Committee to impose penalties after an Iranian athlete refused to compete against an Israeli. The Simon Wiesenthal Center and the Anti-Defamation League called for action after Iranian judoka Arash Miresmaeili refused to fight Israel's Ehud Vaks on Aug. 13.

### A JCC grows in Moscow

The Russian Jewish Congress launched a campaign to raise several million dollars for a new JCC in Moscow.

The 300,000-square-foot center, slated to be built by 2008 on a land plot opposite the Choral Synagogue, will be constructed with funds provided by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Russian-born U.S. businessman Len Blavatnik, the Jewish Agency for Israel and local donors.

According to the president of the Russian Jewish Congress, Yevgeny Satanovsky, the project's budget will approach \$50 million. The new JCC will house educational, sports and youth facilities as well as a center for the Jewish Agency.

### Russian Jews want representation

Russian Jews hope to have their own representative on the board of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany by next year.

The group's board, which includes representatives of the largest Diaspora communities, never included any members from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union even though these regions are the largest recipients of funds channeled to Holocaust survivors through the Claims Conference, Russian Jewish Congress President Yevgeny Satanovsky said Tuesday.