

**IN THE NEWS**
**Israeli troops expected to withdraw**

Israeli forces are expected to begin withdrawing from Lebanon by Wednesday.

Security sources said Tuesday that talks have begun between Israeli top brass and their Lebanese counterparts for an imminent redeployment in southern Lebanon. The first area to be handed over to the Lebanese army is the easternmost segment of the frontier.

According to an unconfirmed report Tuesday, Israeli troops already have left the main town in that area, Marjayoun. Lebanon says it has sent some 15,000 soldiers to the Litani River ahead of a full handover of the South.

**Livni heads to New York**

Israel's foreign minister was scheduled to travel to New York to lobby for Israel's interests in the Israel-Hezbollah cease-fire.

Tzipi Livni, who will fly Tuesday night, will meet with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan as he considers the international force to be stationed in southern Lebanon.

Livni also will meet with diplomatic officials and Jewish leaders.

**Peace on Israeli defense chief's mind**

Israel's defense minister called for peace talks with Lebanon, the Palestinians and eventually Syria.

"Every war creates opportunities for an extensive diplomatic process," Amir Peretz said Tuesday in a Tel Aviv speech, his most extensive public comments since a cease-fire ended Israel's offensive against Hezbollah this week.

"I'm certain that our enemies understand they cannot prevail over us. I plan to do whatever I can to restore diplomatic support for Israel."

The comments were received coolly by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's office.

# WORLD REPORT

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## Politicking over Israel: Jewish state becomes fodder in congressional war

By DAVID J. SILVERMAN

**W**ASHINGTON (JTA) — When is asking "is it good for Israel" not so good for Israel?

Democrats and Republicans, politicking hard ahead of midterm elections that could end Republican control of the U.S. Congress, are battling over which party was more supportive of Israel in its war with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

"Republicans only offer support to Israel when they think that they'll get something for it," Democrats howled after the Republican-led Congress feted Nouri al-Maliki, Iraq's prime minister who stood with Hezbollah in the recent conflict.

A ranking Democrat "is publicly supporting a terrorist organization," Republicans barked back after Rep. John Dingell (D-Mich.) dithered on whether Congress should support Israel in the war.

Jewish leaders have spent years carefully cultivating the bromide that support for Israel is the one bipartisan issue; some tried hard not to wince.

"I do not see the point of constantly testing members of Congress on their Israel bona fides," said Steve Rabinowitz, a former Clinton aide and Democratic strategist who was unhappy with both sides for making the war political fodder. "Just for partisan purposes to routinely, constantly test how far you can push members of Congress, I think it's totally alienating."

Others said the process was healthy.

"I think it's a good thing to have members of Congress outdo their colleagues by showing that their pro-Israel credentials are stronger than the next guy's," said William

Daroff, vice president of public policy at United Jewish Communities and a former Republican activist.

"When Israel is in the existential battle for survival that it now finds itself in, having people argue whether they are the best friend of Israel or the bester friend of Israel really shows the parameters of where the vast majority of public officials are in America today," he said.

At stake is a community that votes in disproportionately high numbers, that breaks ties in swing states like Florida and Ohio, and that has historically favored Democrats in votes and in campaign contributions.

The opening salvo came in the days after the war started on July 12. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), the minority leader in the U.S. House of Representatives, refused to sponsor a resolution affirming the House's support for Israel in its war against Hezbollah.

Pelosi, who otherwise supported the resolution and instructed her caucus to vote for it, objected to the omission of language calling on both sides to safeguard civilian lives.

The wrangling went on behind closed doors, but Republicans sidestepped congressional niceties by leaking the dispute to Jewish reporters.

That infuriated Democrats, who noted that Sen. John Warner (R-Va.), the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, had voiced similar concerns. They were ready the next week when Maliki came to town.

The Iraqi prime minister was to have represented President Bush's promise of a democratic Iraq emerging from the ashes of civil war — but Jewish lawmakers seized

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## ■ Upcoming midterm elections could end Republican control of the U.S. Congress

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control of the coverage, lambasting Maliki's refusal to join other Arab leaders in condemning Hezbollah for launching the war.

"His comments condemning Israel were wrong but predictable, but his refusal to condemn Hezbollah is painful," said Sen. Charles Schumer, the Jewish Democrat from New York.

Republicans fired next, when Dingell, the longest serving member in the House, explained his vote — one of just eight — against the resolution supporting Israel.

"I don't take sides for or against Hezbollah or for or against Israel," he said in a TV interview. His next sentence in what was a confused interview was: "I condemn Hezbollah as does everybody else, for the violence."

The second sentence was left out in Republican releases. The National Republican Congressional Committee accused Dingell of "support for a known terrorist organization."

Often the digs, which increased in frequency as the war continued, come down to headcounts: Democrats made hay of the fact that Republicans made up 10 of 12 U.S. senators who failed to sign a letter to the European Union urging it to classify Hezbollah as a terrorist group.

Just because the guns have fallen silent, doesn't mean the shouting has stopped.

The Republican Jewish Coalition is launching an ad campaign this week linking Democratic Sen. Joseph Lieberman's

loss in the Connecticut primary last week to what it says is receding Democratic support for Israel.

"Joe Lieberman was a voice of support for Israel," the ad says. "That voice has been silenced by the Democratic Party. America and Israel are worse off for it."

The National Jewish Democratic Council is urging newspapers not to take the ad, calling the RJC "beyond hypocritical" because of its earlier broadsides against Lieberman, who was the first Jew to make a viable presidential ticket in 2000.

Democrats had no choice but to respond, said Ira Forman, the NJDC executive director.

"When they play this hypocritical gotcha game, we're stupid unless we respond," he said. "If you're going to play that gotcha game, you live by the sword you die by the sword."

The attacks make political sense for Republicans. A recent Los Angeles Times/Bloomberg poll, conducted between July 28 and Aug. 1, found a striking partisan gap in support for Israel: Democrats supported neutrality over alignment with the Jewish state, 54 percent to 39 percent, while Republicans supported alignment with the Jewish state over

neutrality, 64 percent to 29 percent.

Forman attributed the results to the GOP's substantial evangelical base. "If you take evangelical Christians out of the equation, Democrats and Republicans look about the same on Israel," he said.

Republican Jews say the poll indicates the Democrats are no longer steadfast on Israel's security.

Noam Neuser, a former Jewish liaison to the current Bush administration, said that although the trend represents an opportunity for his party, it is disquieting for those who want support for Israel to remain bipartisan.

"What concerns me is that the Democratic

Party's rank and file appears to be becoming hostile to Israel's security needs," Neuser said.

Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said that if anything, the bickering was a comfort to him. He had feared that the war would mean Israel would get sucked into the pre-election for-Bush/against-Bush polarization.

"What we've seen is the reverse," Foxman said. "The Democrats who are opposed to the president on 99 percent of things are closing ranks on Israel." ■

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## Yeshiva, local officials deny wrongdoing

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Yeshiva board members and a Maryland County executive are denying allegations that campaign contributions encouraged the county to spend millions on renovating two religious schools.

In 1999, the Yeshiva of Greater Washington leased a decrepit building in Montgomery County, Md., with the understanding that the yeshiva would pay renovation costs. But the county bought

the school back and leased a new one for the yeshiva.

Allegations have been raised that the \$9.9 million package, which provided nearly enough money to cover the renovations at both schools, was influenced by \$92,000 in contributions that County Executive Doug Duncan received from yeshiva supporters since 1998.

The second school is a girls school run by the yeshiva. ■

# Anti-Semitism rises with conflict

By JENNIFER JACOBSON

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Since the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah began in mid-July, a form of hate older than the Jewish state increasingly is rearing its ugly head: anti-Semitism.

July saw an attack against a synagogue in Sydney, Australia, vandalism of synagogues and Jewish businesses in Miami and a fatal shooting at Seattle's Jewish federation.

August brought more of the same: Molotov cocktails and rocks were thrown at a synagogue in Brazil, a menorah was smashed at a Jewish chapel near Los Angeles and anti-Israel vandals defaced some 20 Jewish shops in Rome.

It's no coincidence that the number of attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions spikes at a time of violence in the Middle East, as people sympathetic to the Arab cause often take out their anger at Israel on Jews closer to home.

Jews in Europe typically bear the brunt of attacks far more than U.S. Jews. After the Palestinian intifada began in September 2000, anti-Semitic incidents in Europe skyrocketed.

"This country does not have the tradition of political violence and extremism that Europe has," says Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League.

The United States also has fewer frustrated and angry immigrants from Arab and Muslim countries, he says. More importantly, Foxman contends, the United States has made sure perpetrators pay the consequences for anti-Semitic acts.

But even if Israel's war in Lebanon resumes, American Jews' security will not be threatened significantly, say Jewish leaders, who already have stepped up security measures at community organizations.

That may not be true for Jews in Europe and elsewhere, however.

Britain in particular has seen a spike in anti-Semitic incidents following the start of the war in Lebanon. The Community Security Trust, which monitors the security of British Jewry, has recorded at least 90 such incidents during July, says Mark Gardner, the group's spokesman.

The incidents are primarily nonviolent and tend to involve abusive rhetoric, threats, e-mails and graffiti.

There's "a range of things being said,"

Gardner says, "most commonly, sympathy for Hezbollah and calling Israel 'Nazis,' and at the same time saying Hitler should have finished off the Jews."

In an average month, when tensions in the Middle East are not running high, Gardner says the trust records 20 to 40 anti-Semitic incidents. During the 1990s, before the intifada, those figures were substantially lower, some 15 to 25 per month.

In 2004 the trust saw a record high of 532 incidents. In 2005 that number dropped to 455, still the second-highest total since CST began recording such incidents in 1984.

Gardner calls conflicts in the Middle East "trigger events." When accusations against Israel intensify — some in Britain have accused Israel recently of propagating a massacre in Lebanon — people "take their hatred out on any Jew they can find," Gardner says.

In Britain, anti-Israel sentiment has become conflated with anti-Semitism, he says. This results in Jews becoming scapegoats for Israeli policy, and increases their chances of coming under attack.

Anti-Semitic incidents also have risen in the United States in the wake of fighting in Lebanon.

Still, that doesn't mean anti-Semitism here will approach the levels of Europe during the intifada.

In the United States, there's "less tolerance for racism, bigotry and anti-Semitic behavior," Foxman says. And Americans are much quicker than Europeans to condemn such behavior, calling it "un-American, immoral, un-Christian."

Other experts on anti-Semitism agree.

In the United States, "it's really hard to find a Jew who cannot participate in their society either individually or collectively on a day-to-day basis because of fear of anti-Semitism," says Jerome Chanes, author of "A Dark Side of History: Anti-Semitism through the Ages."

Meanwhile, he says, whatever anti-Semitic expression there is in Europe is re-

lated to the state of security of Jews there, which is not the case in the United States.

While the Seattle shooting was directly related to the Middle East conflict — the shooter, a radical Muslim, said he acted out of anger toward Israel — Chanes emphasizes that it's still a single incident in a country of 280 million people.

Neil Kressel believes he knows why there haven't been more such attacks. In publications and religious sermons coming out of most Muslim countries, "you find hate on the level of Nazism in terms of demonization of Jews," says Kressel, a professor of psychology at William Paterson University of New Jersey and author of "Mass Hate: The Global Rise of Genocide and Terror." "That hatred does not appear as much in Western Muslim populations or

'In Europe, the effect of words can be a lot more incendiary, and the political atmosphere, the press atmosphere is much more critical of Israel.'

Shai Franklin  
World Jewish Congress

mosques."

The chance that frustrated Muslims will turn hateful words into violent actions is much greater in Europe, given its history of Nazism and the fact that its social contract and application of free-speech laws differ greatly from America's, says Shai Franklin, director of international organizations at the World Jewish Congress.

"We give people more latitude in what they say," he says. "In Europe, the effect of words can be a lot more incendiary, and the political atmosphere, the press atmosphere is much more critical of Israel."

Rabbi Marvin Hier is frustrated at the importance pundits place on trying to find out why. The founder and dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center has grown weary of the constant refrain that the West must understand the root causes of Islamic fundamentalism and that these people are really angry over injustice at the hands of the West.

"Why should we understand the root causes?" Hier asks. "They're the only people in the history of the world who've been angry? Other people do not behave in that manner. That's what we should understand."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### MIDDLE EAST

#### Olmert takes responsibility for war

Ehud Olmert took responsibility for Israel's war with Hezbollah. Speaking Monday to the Israeli Knesset, the Israeli prime minister said the war showed that "Israel won't suffer any harm to come to its sovereignty or citizens."

Olmert's comments came amid increasing criticism over his government's management of the month-long war.

#### Nasrallah declares victory

Sheik Hassan Nasrallah declared victory in Hezbollah's war with Israel. Speaking Monday on Hezbollah's Al-Manar Television, Hezbollah's leader said his group had won a "strategic, historic victory" in the monthlong conflict.

The war, which began July 12 when Hezbollah killed eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two more in a cross-border raid, led to the deaths of more than 1,000 Lebanese, reduced Hezbollah strongholds to ruins and cost the country billions of dollars in damage.

At the same time, Hezbollah gained some credibility in the Arab world because it did not capitulate to Israeli forces and wreaked a monthlong campaign of violence on northern Israel.

#### Sharon's condition worsening

Ariel Sharon's condition deteriorated further. Doctors at Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer said Monday that the former Israeli prime minister's brain function had worsened and he had developed pneumonia in both lungs.

Sharon has been in a coma since suffering a Jan. 4 stroke, which followed a milder stroke.

#### Palestinian rocket reaches deepest point

A rocket fired by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip reached deeper than ever into Israel. The Russian-made Katyusha hit the Ashkelon marina Monday, causing damage but no casualties. Officials said the strike, 15 miles from northern Gaza, marked a new record for Palestinian terrorists who have been trying to extend the range of their rockets.

Israel's air force bombed the launcher in the Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, killing three Palestinians. Locals described the dead as farmers but military officials said they were trying to retrieve the launcher.

#### Israel releases Palestinian official

Israel released a Palestinian Authority Cabinet member. After his release Monday, Labor Minister Muhammad Barghouti, a member of Hamas, called on Israel to release other arrested Palestinian officials.

### NORTH AMERICA

#### AIPAC judge won't broaden case

The judge in the classified information case against two former pro-Israel lobbyists rejected a prosecution attempt to broaden the indictment. Prosecutors had sought to redefine as classified a document described as unclassified in the original indictment.

Judge T.S. Ellis III rejected the request last Friday, saying it would unconstitutionally alter the indictment. Keith Weissman, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's former Iran analyst, asked Larry Franklin, a Pentagon Iran analyst who since has pleaded guilty, for the document in June 2003.

It's the only document that Weissman or his former boss, Steve Rosen, actively solicited, according to their August 2005 indictment. In pre-trial rulings, Ellis has made clear that at trial he will expect

a higher bar of evidence to prove that defendants knew they were hearing classified information in conversations, as opposed to receiving documentation.

#### Israeli ex-general protested on Capitol Hill

A group suing a former Israeli military chief staged a news conference outside a congressional office building where he was holding a briefing.

Speakers at Monday afternoon's protest, which was sponsored by the Coalition for Justice & Accountability, accused Moshe Ya'alon of war crimes for his involvement in the 1996 bombing of a United Nations compound in Kana, Lebanon, that resulted in 106 civilian deaths.

One of the speakers, Michael Poulshock, a cooperating attorney with the Center for Constitutional Rights, represents families of the victims, who have filed a civil suit against Ya'alon. Speakers also blasted Israel for the recent war with Hezbollah. Ya'alon briefed congressional staffers, administration advisers and policy insiders on the crisis in Lebanon.

#### U.S. officials meet Jordanians over worker rights

Jordan's labor minister met with U.S. officials amid allegations of abuse of foreign workers at Jordanian-Israeli joint ventures.

Bassem Salem met Sunday with the U.S. ambassador to Jordan, David Hale, and delegates from the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to discuss workers' rights in the country's qualified industrial zones.

#### Alleged murderer's father uses JAP defense

The father of a man standing trial in Tennessee for allegedly murdering his wife said he helped his son conceal the body because "she was a typical JAP." The videotaped deposition by Col. Arthur March was played Saturday in a Tennessee court.

March's son, Perry, is accused of killing Janet March in 1996 after she said she wanted a divorce. Court TV reported that Arthur March, who received a reduced sentence in exchange for testifying, called his former daughter-in-law a "Jewish-American Princess," adding "Anything she wanted, she went to her father."

#### Jewish Greeks advocate for Israel

Jewish fraternities and sororities are launching an Israel advocacy push on college campuses this fall.

Alpha Epsilon Pi and Alpha Epsilon Phi, the two largest Jewish Greek organizations, brought 90 students to Louisville, Ky., from Sunday through Tuesday to learn about building support for Israel.

### WORLD

#### Group: Anti-Semitic incidents up in Britain

Anti-Semitic incidents in Britain escalated in July due to hostilities in the Middle East, a survey found. The Community Security Trust, which monitors security in the British Jewish community, recorded twice as many incidents in July 2006 as during the same time period a year before.

The trust also warned that the risk of a terrorist attack against the British Jewish community was heightened, though no specific threats to the community have been linked to last week's foiled terror plot at major London airports.

#### Donors conference set for Lebanon

Sweden invited 60 countries and aid agencies to attend a donor conference to help rebuild Lebanon. Israel was not invited to the conference, which is scheduled for Aug. 31 in Stockholm.