

'Can't just run away'

Former WB resident vows to stay in Israel despite missile attacks

By Darrell Clem
staff writer

THE GULF WAR Hitting Home

Don Weintraub's determination to stay in Israel didn't weaken Tuesday after an Iraqi missile slammed into a Tel Aviv neighborhood, just a mile from the apartment building where Weintraub donned a gas mask, took cover in a sealed room and waited.

"I have a life here. My job is here, and I have friends here," said Weintraub, 26, a former West Bloomfield resident. "I can't run away. That's what Saddam Hussein would want."

Weintraub's mother, Ruth, wept when she telephoned him from West Bloomfield after Tuesday's Iraqi Scud missile attack on Israel.

"I GOT THIS frantic call at 2:30 a.m.," Weintraub said. "Usually my mother is the strong one with the iron fist."

Weintraub, a 1982 West Bloomfield High School graduate, described the situation in Israel as tense during a telephone interview Wednesday from an apartment in the heart of Tel Aviv, where he has been staying with a friend, Kobi Rosen. Weintraub works as a reporter and translator for the Israel Commercial Economic Newsletter, a

weekly, English-language journal. Huddling in a sealed room, Weintraub didn't see the Iraqi Scud missile that thundered into Israel Tuesday, eluding U.S. Patriot missile defenses and shattering the quiet of the Tel Aviv neighborhood. But he heard a loud explosion when the missile struck, and he heard lesser blasts as other Scuds were destroyed.

"You just hope that the missiles aren't going to hit in your neighborhood," Weintraub said. "We could hear the missiles and the explosions, but the house wasn't shaking or anything."

When the warning sirens alerted Weintraub and Rosen to the attack, they had mere seconds to act. They fled to the safest room in the apartment, put on their gas masks, made sure the room was properly sealed with nylon and tape, and switched on the radio and television.

"Kobi usually seals the door while I turn on the radio and television,"

Weintraub said. "We sort of have a routine now."

Weintraub compared the scenario to a game of roulette, with missiles "dropping all around you."

WHEN AN IRAQI ATTACK comes, he said, Israeli citizens have only seconds to prepare. And although the threat of death instills fears, "You don't really have a lot of time to ponder things," he said.

Although workplaces in Tel Aviv were shut down for several days, Weintraub returned to his job last week to help put out a special war edition of the newsletter. Some editions have been delayed because of the attacks on Israel.

When Weintraub took a bus home from work one night after the attack, he noticed how eerie the atmosphere had become in Tel Aviv. Only one other passenger sat on a bus that normally would have been

abundant with people. Many streets were jammed with cars, he said. Many citizens have fled to outlying areas where they are less likely to be injured or killed during an attack.

Weintraub chose to stay in the city.

"I'm here with friends. They have kind of taken me in," he said, adding

that he'd rather be with friends than alone. "Israelis are very warm-hearted. I feel very comfortable here."

Even before he moved to Israel six months ago, Weintraub had spent some summers in the Middle East, working at Tel Aviv University, at an Israeli pharmaceutical company and as an intern in the Commerce Department in Cairo.

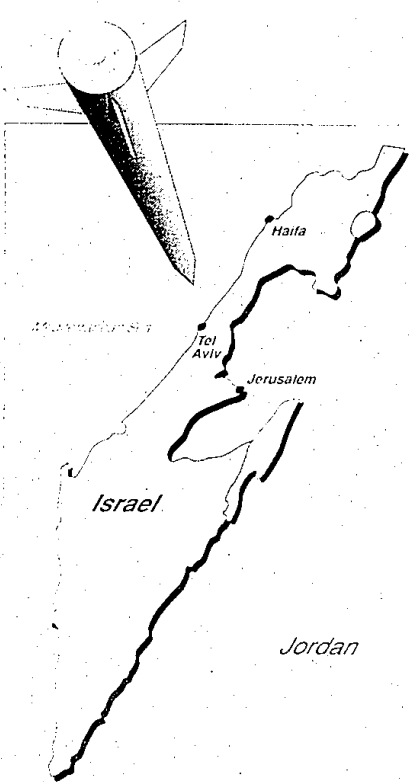
He had studied Hebrew and Arabic languages and received a joint master's degree in Middle East studies and business administration in 1989 from the University of Michigan. Now he has dual citizenship in the United States and Israel.

THOUGH HIS MOTHER worries about his safety, she said Thursday that she understands his decision to remain in Israel during the Persian Gulf war.

"As a mother, I would like him near to me, but I have to let him do what he thinks is right," she said. "I feel very strong about his decision, although I'm worried. I've learned to live with this from day to day, and hopefully the war will be over soon."

Weintraub has the same hope as his mother, though he vowed to stay in Israel even if the war continues for a long time.

"I can't just run away," he said.



Surgeon back from Israel — temporarily

By Shirlee Rose Iden
staff writer

While "a string of miracles" kept casualties and damage light in the wake of recent missile attacks on Tel Aviv, Israel, last week, one area couple bit their own personal bullet and flew home.

"I didn't want to come back," said Sheldon Mintz, a dentist, surgeon, and professor. "But Sybil's mother in

Southfield was concerned and kept calling, and our daughter was very panicked.

"I was prepared to stay and treat casualties. Fortunately, at the time of our departure on Tuesday, Jan. 22, we didn't have any. If I had been injured to treat, I would not have left for anything. And now I'm only here temporarily."

The couple, who live in West Bloomfield, have an apartment near Tel Aviv and since 1981 spend about four months each year there. While Mintz does surgery and teaches at Tel Aviv University, his wife practices watercolor painting, glass art, taking part in archeological digs and attending lectures.

BOTH ARE NATIVE Detroiters, who met when she was 21 in front of her house on Lauder Street, introduced by her neighbor who was his best friend. She had graduated from Mumford High School and would earn degrees including master's degrees in art education, fine arts and art history from the University of Michigan and Wayne State.

"I always had a strong feeling about Judaism," she said. "My grandfather was a cantor and mohel, but I never thought about going to Israel."

Now she has made more than 50 trips to the Jewish nation, starting with 1971 when she and her husband took their 6-year-old son and 9-year-old daughter to Israel to attend a dental fraternity convention.

FOR HER and her husband, who said Judaism has always been central in his life, things changed after that trip. They visited Israel frequently and studied Hebrew in Ullpan classes at home. "We thought about moving there," she said.

On Jan. 3, just 12 days before the deadline for the UN resolutions to be implemented, they arrived in Israel right on their usual schedule. What was different were grim preparations for potential war and chemical attacks they had to go through.

"When we got there, Shel started teaching and doing his surgery, but

'I didn't want to come back.'

— Sheldon Mintz

everything was disrupted by the topics of war, Jan. 15, and the extreme shortage of water," she said.

"We prepared a safe room. I sealed the windows with tape, then put up a heavy plastic sheet and taped that. We bought canned food, bottled water and extra batteries, a fan, long raincoats and boots to protect against gas attacks and gloves. We had to be prepared against gas."

They filled a bucket with chlorine bleach and kept towels to push against the door in case there was gas. "We had a powder to treat skin exposed to chemicals and kept bags for discarding contaminated clothing."

"WE WERE SUPPLIED with atropine in syringes to use after a chemical attack. In the end, we taped all the windows in the house. Although we were faced with the decision of whether to stay in the safe room or go down to the building shelter. They said in the case of chemicals, being higher up was better."

"These were always very stressful decisions, but I will never forget putting on the gas mask for the first time. It was terrifying and my heart went out to those who had small children."

By the time they had passed seven tension-filled days, the couple were being urged to return to the states. They also realized that with the war conditions, he was not teaching or doing surgery.

"We didn't want to leave," Sybil Mintz said. "We were torn in half, but we couldn't do what we were there for, and our family was distressed. We didn't want to abandon our friends. After the first alert, when we were allowed to go out, we went out on the streets. We walked, stopped for coffee and visited. There was a great sense of unity. And every person had their gas mask."

Bates Hamburgers, 22291 Middlebelt, Jan. 22
A gold wedding band valued at \$700 was reported stolen from a house on Salisbury, Dec. 22-23-1990.
A stereo and phone valued at \$1,300 were reported stolen from a car on Old Timber, Jan. 19.
A bracelet and coins valued at \$1,050 were reported stolen from a house on Valleyview, Jan. 12.
A watch and cash valued at \$2,075 were reported stolen from a house on Old Timber, Jan. 19.
A London Fog overcoat valued at \$600 was reported stolen from Mountain Jack restaurant, 24275 Sinaola Court, Dec. 16.
A tool box and tools valued at \$450 were reported stolen from a car on Westcott Crescent, Jan. 23-24.
A video camera valued at \$899 was reported stolen from Radio Shack, 30890 Orchard Lake Road, Jan. 24.
Jewelry valued at \$30,900 and \$900 cash were reported stolen from a unit at Diamond Forest Apartments, 23090 Halsted, Jan. 24.
A radio, stereo cassette, equalizer, amplifier and speakers valued at \$903 were reported stolen from a car in the Green Hill Apartment parking lot, Green Hill, Jan. 24.

Calling for information

If you're seeking information on family members serving in the Persian Gulf the Pentagon is providing these 24-hour toll free numbers.

- Air Force**
(800) 253-9276
- Army**
(800) 626-1440
- Coast Guard**
(800) 367-8724
- Marines**
(800) 523-2694
- Navy**
(800) 255-3808
- Navy ****
(800) 732-1206

*Immediate family members
**Other friends and relatives

When calling be prepared to give the following information about the servicemember: military unit, Social Security number, proper spelling of the last name and rank

Customer attempts to steal money, punches store clerk

Listed below are some of the Farmington area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week.

● **ASSAULT REPORTED**
A 50-year-old female employee of Perry Drugs, 37037 Grand River, was assaulted Jan. 22, as a customer apparently attempted to steal money from the store's cash register.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report, the man had purchased something in the store, then asked if he could wait inside for his ride. He then requested change.

As the employee opened the register, the man grabbed some bills. The woman slammed the register closed and he punched her in the face and fled the building on foot.

The incident occurred about 8:21 p.m.

● **INDECENT EXPOSURE**
A 17-year-old Farmington woman reported a case of indecent exposure at about 10:30 p.m. as she was walking on Astor near Floral.

The victim first saw a white car, then a male voice asking her for directions. When she turned to look at the man, he was standing in his car

police/ fire calls

highlights with his pants around his knees.

No suspects are in custody.

● **CAR FIRE**
A motorist was not injured after the carburetor in his car caught fire, according to a Farmington Hills fire report. The man ran out of gas on Northwestern Highway, west of Middlebelt, added gas to the tank from a gas can and tried starting the car with starting fluid when it backfired and ignited the carburetor. Damage was estimated at \$600.

● **THEFTS REPORTED**
Four tires and rims valued at \$700 were reported stolen from a 1989 converted Mustang at Your Cleaners, 29571 Orchard Lake Road, Jan. 22.
A purse containing a wallet, gold watch and other items valued at \$446 were reported stolen from

COVERING THE CONFLICT

COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE OF THE WAR IN THE PERSIAN GULF

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