

**IN THE NEWS**
**Under pressure,  
Sharon is defiant**

Ariel Sharon said he will not resign over a corruption scandal rocking Israeli politics.

"I have no intention of resigning and am confident of my ability to complete my current term," the prime minister was quoted as telling Israel's daily Yediot Achronot on Thursday in one of several media interviews.

On Wednesday, businessman David Appel was indicted for trying to bribe Sharon in the late 1990s, when he was foreign minister.

**Sharon adviser  
meets Bush adviser**

A senior adviser to Israel's prime minister met with top U.S. officials to discuss the stalemate with the Palestinians. Dov Weisglass met for 90 minutes Thursday with Condoleezza Rice, President Bush's national security adviser, and Eliot Abrams, the top Bush adviser on Middle East policy.

Israeli officials said the meeting was positive and dealt only with Palestinian issues — a sign that neither Israel nor the United States takes seriously recent peace overtures by Syria.

Israel has been lobbying hard to get the United States to help make its case next month at the International Court of Justice, when the court considers Israel's security barrier in the West Bank.

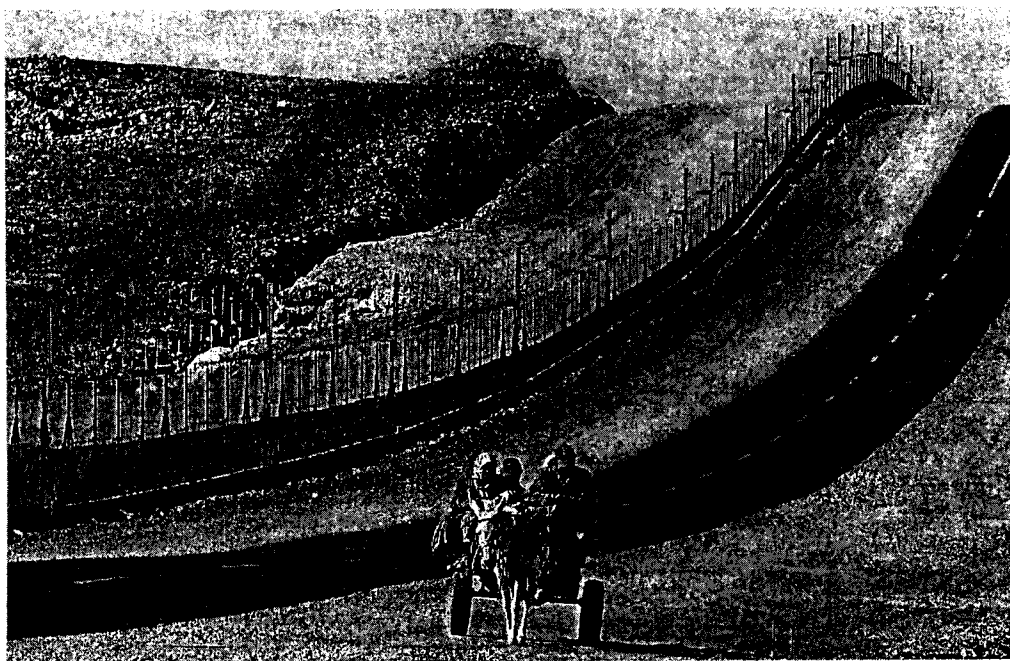
**Mixed response to  
new voucher program**

The first federally funded school-voucher program met with protests by the Union of Reform Judaism and support from the Orthodox Union. The Senate approved the system for Washington schools Thursday, and President Bush has said he will sign the bill, seen as a pilot for the rest of the country.

The system allows needy parents to use vouchers to transfer their children from low-performing public schools to private schools, including religious schools.

# WORLD REPORT

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Brian Hendler

Palestinians ride on a donkey-drawn cart near part of Israel's security fence in the West Bank.

## On fence case at The Hague, U.S. is unlikely to back Israel

By RON KAMPEAS

**W**ASHINGTON (JTA) — The Bush administration does not like the International Court of Justice at The Hague, but it likes the route of Israel's West Bank security barrier even less.

That's why the administration plans to stay out of a case at The Hague over the security fence — unless Israel demonstrates beforehand that the fence will hew to the West Bank boundary line.

U.S. officials initially balked when the court announced last year that it would consider the legality of the security fence in

February. The court had been prodded by the U.N. General Assembly, which usually votes overwhelmingly against Israel.

Israel maintains that the court does not have the authority to rule on the fence, and that in any case the fence does not violate international law.

Experts say it will be the first time that the court, which usually deals with border disputes, has considered an issue of occupation.

Any ruling could set a precedent for the court to consider the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

That makes it all the more remarkable that the United States likely will stay silent

*Continued on page 2*

**BEHIND THE  
HEADLINES**

## ■ *President Bush is unhappy with the hearing, but likes the fence even less*

*Continued from page 1*

on the court's authority in the case.

Israeli, U.S. and Jewish officials all confirmed the Bush administration's strategy on the court case.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's top adviser, Dov Weisglass, was in Washington this week to try to persuade the White House to change its mind and come down on Israel's side in opposing the court's jurisdiction.

On Thursday, Weisglass met with President Bush's national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, on the issue.

An Israeli official described the meeting as positive.

Israel says the fence has proven successful at stemming the tide of Palestinian terrorists.

The director-general of Israel's Foreign Ministry also raised the issue in meetings in Washington this week, emphasizing humanitarian measures Israel plans to take to offset the hardship posed by the barrier. Israeli officials said Yoav Biran had a positive response from the State Department officials he met, but a U.S. official said the United States had not changed its position.

In its attempt to bring the United States on board, Israel is appealing to Bush administration frustration with the United Nations.

"This is the politicization of another

U.N. body," one official said. "You've seen the creeping politicization of the United Nations and U.N. bodies; now the U.N. court is going to be co-opted by the anti-Israel agenda."

The hallmark of President Bush's foreign policy has been to emphasize the natural lead the world's only remaining superpower has in determining the course of peace and security. Bush has downplayed the importance of the United Nations, NATO and other international organizations in decisions ranging from the war in Iraq to climate control.

Two factors are driving the administration's decision to stay out of the dispute over the In-

ternational Court of Justice hearing next month, analysts say.

One is lingering suspicions that Sharon plans to use the fence to determine unilaterally the contours of a potential Palestinian state. The second is a softening in U.S. foreign policy toward international institutions, evinced by Bush's new international outreach effort for assistance in the transition to civilian rule in Iraq.

"We're seeing a kind of return to a more pragmatic U.S. policy in some regards," said David Mack, vice president of the Middle East Institute and a former assistant deputy secretary of state for Near East affairs.

"There are some things that ideologically have been opposed by this administration that are nonetheless features of this world that we are not likely to change," he said. "In Iraq, for instance, we cannot confer legitimacy on a government, but the U.N. may be able to."

A measure of the Bush administration's extended hand to the international community could be a renewed effort to bring Israel and the Palestinians together — long a demand of European nations. Two top administration envoys, John Wolf and David Satterfield, are to travel together to the region in coming weeks.

In an address Wednesday, Wolf said "Israel should not prejudice the final negotiations with walls and fences." However, Wolf emphasized that the principal obstacle to peace was the failure of the

Palestinians to stop terrorism.

"I have to say on the Palestinian side it was all talk and no action," the assistant secretary of state told a forum Wednesday in Washington hosted by Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.

The United States does not want to have to defend the barrier along its current lines, which cut off much of Jerusalem's Arab population from Palestinians in the West Bank.

"The State Department would not argue in favor of the fence along its current lines," said Edward Abington, now a Washington consultant to the Palestinian Authority and formerly a U.S. consul in Jerusalem.

Bush was furious with Sharon last summer when Palestinians presented him with evidence that Israel was plotting the fence along lines that would cut off a future Palestinian state from Jordan.

That would improve Israel's ability to prevent the flow of weapons into a Palestinian state, but would make the Palestinian state's economy dependent on Israel's.

The fence will appear in the State Department's annual report on human rights, due out next month, despite Israel's pleas to the administration not to address the barrier. A U.S. official said the passage will express U.S. concerns but will not be especially pronounced in its criticism of the fence.

Mack said mentioning the fence was inevitable. "They can't have a credible section about the West Bank without the fence," he said.

Israel plans to argue initially that the international court has no jurisdiction in the matter, but the court's decision to hear the case — and its invitation to the Arab League to submit briefs — means that argument likely will fall flat.

Any ruling in such a case would be only advisory and not binding. But a negative decision would ratchet up pressure on Israel to alter the course of the fence.

The prospect clearly worries Israel's government. Senior government ministers, including Justice Minister Yosef "Tommy" Lapid, have suggested altering the route to adhere to the Israel-Jordan border before the 1967 Six-Day War as a means of heading off the court.

That would be exactly the measure that would rouse U.S. interest in lending Israel its considerable weight at the court.

**The United States suspects Israel may be using the fence to determine the contours of a future Palestinian state.**

### **JTA** WORLD REPORT

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# Conservatives put out new harassment rules

By JOE BERKOFSKY

NEW YORK (JTA) — Moving to combat reported sexual harassment and abuse in Conservative synagogues, the movement's congregational body is issuing a new set of guidelines to deal with the problem.

The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism unveiled the non-binding guidelines on its Web site last week in response to what Rabbi Jerome Epstein, the organization's executive vice president, said were a series of reports of "abusive behavior" by clergy and synagogue staff.

"It wasn't widespread, but over the past 17 months I've heard of 15 to 16 cases," Epstein told JTA. "Some of it may have bordered on sexual" harassment, and some cases "were hushed up," he said. "The more this is out in the open, the better the chances will be of diminishing it."

In proposing the guidelines, the association of more than 800 Conservative synagogues in North America joins several congregational and rabbinic bodies in the other major denominations that have issued similar standards over the past decade.

The move also comes more than a year after the culmination of one of the most highly publicized sex-abuse cases to hit the Jewish community, that of Orthodox youth leader Rabbi Baruch Lanner.

Some of the new guidelines reflect efforts to respond to the Lanner case.

Lanner, 54, a regional director in New Jersey of the National Conference of Synagogue Youth, was sentenced to prison in 2002 for sexually abusing teenage girls and women and physically abusing boys and girls as a principal of a New Jersey yeshiva.

The case drew fire in part because a report by an investigative commission of the youth group's parent organization, the Orthodox Union, criticized O.U. leaders for failing to intervene even though they knew of the abuse allegations for several years.

Other instances have surfaced involving sexual misconduct and inappropriate behavior by Jewish clergy:

- An Orthodox chaplain, Rabbi Israel Kestenbaum, 55, of Highland Park, N.J., was caught in an undercover sting and pleaded guilty last August to charges of trying to arrange a sexual tryst with someone he met over the Internet who he thought was a 13-year-old girl.

- Reform Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman, 58, resigned as president of the Hebrew

Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Manhattan in December 2000 after HUC said he had carried on "personal relationships" with members of his congregation while serving as a pulpit rabbi.

- Cantor Howard Nevison, 61, of a prominent New York Reform synagogue, Temple Emanuel, was accused of molesting a young nephew and remains on trial.

- Cantor Robert Shapiro, 69, of the Reform Temple Beth Am in Randolph, Mass., was charged with raping and molesting a mentally challenged woman.

- A Conservative rabbi, Sidney Goldenberg, 58, of Petaluma, Calif., pleaded no contest in February 1997 to charges of sexually molesting a Bat Mitzvah student.

However serious, reports of such cases have remained limited and haven't approached the proportions of the Catholic Church's clergy abuse scandals.

Since the church scandals surfaced, Epstein said he has worried that the Jewish community "had taken a self-righteous position that at least it's not us."

United Synagogue's new standards not only take aim at inappropriate sexual acts, but also cover a range of behavior that went unchallenged decades ago.

The rules are meant to govern relations between congregants and rabbis, cantors, educators, professionals and lay leaders.

Behavior such as "leering, catcalls or touching," "insulting or obscene comments or gestures," and the display of sexually suggestive pictures all would be banned.

The policy also bans the telling of sexual jokes, negative stereotyping and the use of epithets or slurs, as well as hostility directed against a person based on race, religion, color, disability, national origin, marital status or sexual orientation.

The rules also are meant to help clergy avoid situations where they could be open to charges of harassment or abuse. For example, rabbis are cautioned to conduct some business that once remained private in public places, never to meet alone with a child or teenager and never to touch them.

"We're concerned about false accusa-

tions," said Rabbi Moshe Adelman, who chairs the United Synagogue commission on congregational standards, which helped draft the new guidelines. The rabbis hope

synagogues eventually will adapt the new standards in some form.

"Most synagogues have a clean slate," Adelman said. "My feeling is this ought to be read, studied and adapted" to protect synagogue staff and congregants.

Other groups have proposed or enacted similar rules on sexual conduct in recent years.

The Lanner commission called for Orthodox groups to enact new poli-

cies on reporting and dealing with abuse allegations, following charges that NCSY officials turned a blind eye to at least four reports of abuse by Lanner.

In the report's wake, the NCSY enacted broad guidelines against abusive behavior. And last May, the Rabbinical Council of America, an Orthodox rabbinical group, condemned "sexual, physical and emotional violence, abuse or impropriety," and urged the adoption of its own new policies.

The O.U.'s executive vice president, Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, said the RCA is still working on the rules in tandem with the O.U. He also lauded the Conservative guidelines and said the O.U. would "follow suit."

"I'm sure we will be studying the Conservative movement's document. This is not something that discriminates by ideology," he said.

Aftershocks from the Lanner scandal that reverberated throughout the modern Orthodox world sparked earlier organizational crackdowns. Torah U'mesorah, The National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, adopted an abuse policy in 2002.

Liberal groups issued similar policies much earlier. The Union for Reform Judaism, the movement's congregational arm, approved rules against harassment and offensive conduct a decade ago. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association introduced a policy on "breach of trust" in sexual and financial dealings in 1996.

Rabbi Joel Meyers, executive vice president of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Association, lauded the United Synagogue policy.

Since the church scandals surfaced, Rabbi Jerome Epstein has worried that the Jewish community 'had taken a self-righteous position that at least it's not us.'

# Without fanfare, Edwards wins Jewish support

By MATTHEW E. BERGER

PORTSMOUTH, N.H. (JTA) — Sen. John Edwards may not have recognized the Hebrew aleph stitched onto James Dricker's cap, but he understood what was written in his heart.

Dricker, 55, the education director at Temple Israel in Portsmouth, N.H., says he was impressed with Edwards' sincerity after speaking with the North Carolina senator about health care, education and the environment.

"I don't vote Jewish," Dricker said after the get-together days before Christmas at the Friendly Toast restaurant. "I vote based on common sense and what is best for the country and ultimately for me."

Edwards is an exception in a presidential campaign marked by loud declarations of Jewish affinity. He has warm ties with Jews in his state, but he hasn't made an issue of it.

Edwards was a highly successful trial lawyer in North Carolina seven years ago when he sought a seat in the U.S. Senate and largely was able to bankroll his own campaign.

That meant Edwards didn't spend as much time as other aspiring lawmakers courting support and dollars in the Jewish community, both in and out of his state, North Carolina Jewish activists said.

"He didn't seek out the Jewish community," unlike others who "go from candidate event to candidate event begging for money," said Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi, a Democratic political consultant who ran for Congress in North Carolina in 1994.

"Because he was self-financed, he could avoid a lot of that," she said.

Edwards nonetheless has earned the community's support.

He has a solid record on Israel and emphasizes the issues that resonate with Jewish voters like Dricker: health, education and poverty.

Edwards' experience growing up poor in the South helped mold an outlook that makes him attractive to groups that see themselves as outsiders scrambling to get in.

"I feel such a personal responsibility when it comes to issues of civil rights and race," he said, amid bells signaling ready

lunch orders at the New Hampshire coffee shop, which brimmed with tchotchkes.

In his stump speech, Edwards says the color of one's skin or any other circumstances of birth "should never control your destiny."

"I'll never forget when I was in the sixth grade — I was living in Georgia at the time — my sixth grade teacher walked into the classroom at the end of the day and said he wouldn't be teaching next year because they were about to integrate the schools, and he wouldn't teach in an integrated school," Edwards told high school students attending a forum at the Nashua Chamber of Commerce. "He unfortunately didn't use the language that I just used."

Born in South Carolina on June 10, 1953, Edwards and his family soon moved to North Carolina, where he spent most of his childhood.

Edwards was the first in his family to go to college, graduating from North Carolina State University in 1974.

He received a law degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1977.

Ken Broun, a former dean of UNC's law school, first heard of Edwards' as the man another law student — Elizabeth Anania — was going to marry.

In the years that followed, he got a close-up look at the rising trial lawyer.

"He was, as I had been told, one of the best trial lawyers I had ever seen," said Broun, who served as a private judge for a case Edwards was involved in during the early 1990s. "He was an enormously persuasive lawyer who did a very good job for his client."

Edwards' specialty was personal-injury cases involving children.

He won a record-setting verdict for Valerie Lakey, a girl who was severely injured by a faulty swimming pool drain in 1993.

Edwards was apolitical, friends and colleagues said.

"If somebody had told me John Edwards was going to run for political office, I wouldn't have believed them," said Fred

Baron, co-finance chairman of Edwards' campaign and former president of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America.

The death of Edwards' eldest son, Wade, at age 16 in a 1996 car accident, changed Edwards' life.

"When John walked out of the church for Wade's funeral, all he said was, 'Something good has got to come from this,' " Baron said. "You saw a transformation."

Edwards withdrew completely for six months, friends said, and walked away from his law practice.

"He decided at that point that he wanted to do something other than the strict practice of law," Broun said.

He wanted a larger mission, and chose to challenge incumbent Sen. Lauch Faircloth, a Republican.

"When he decided to run for political office, it made incredible sense to me because of his incredible talent to connect with people," said Bill Cassell, a longtime Edwards friend and former Jewish federation campaign chairman in Greensboro.

In late 1997, Broun threw a party to introduce Edwards as a primary candidate for the Senate.

"He had a lot to learn at that time, even on some of the more significant issues," recalled Broun, a former Chapel Hill mayor. "A Chapel Hill political audience is a tough audience, and it was tough for him. He left kind of shaking his head about it."

One story has it that Edwards walked up to the chairwoman of the state Democratic party and said he was going to be the new U.S. senator from the state.

The chairwoman then said that was very nice, but asked Edwards who he was.

Randall Kaplan, a Greensboro businessman who is a board member for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, remembers early meetings Edwards held with Jewish leaders in the community.

"When he first started considering the Senate race, he was a great listener,"

**'That huge Jewish political machine in North Carolina just doesn't exist.'**

**Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi**  
Democratic political consultant

Kaplan said. "He was as knowledgeable as someone can get when they first run for office but didn't have first-hand experience."

Edwards reached out to the Jewish community as a Senate candidate but didn't court Jews the same way other aspiring politicians do.

"He would certainly have ties to individuals in the Jewish community, but I don't know that he has had any ties in any formal way," Broun said.

The North Carolina Jewish community also may not warrant the same treatment that Jews in larger states merit.

"It's a different kind of Jewish community," Broun said.

"Most of us are professional people who might be quite comfortable but are not business people with the kind of money that one would go to in Florida, Illinois or New York."

Laszlo Mizrahi said, "That huge Jewish political machine in North Carolina just doesn't exist."

Upon his election in 1998, Edwards continued listening.

"John would always make himself available to us," Kaplan said. "The one thing John didn't do was pander. He really came and listened."

As a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Edwards soon was binging up on foreign policy.

"A lot of times you go into a Senate office and they just repeat back to you the party line," Kaplan said. "With John, he would really listen and you could tell he was really thinking about it."

Kaplan now advises Edwards' campaign on Israel and Middle East issues.

Edwards visited Israel with Intelligence Committee colleagues in 2001, when a suicide bomber attacked a Sbarro restaurant in downtown Jerusalem, killing 16 people.

"I think the trip left on him an understanding," Kaplan said. "He really gets the strategic issues, the existential issues."

In a statement to JTA, Edwards said he would increase U.S. engagement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with



John Edwards 2004

Sen. John Edwards is relatively new to politics, but his strong showing in Iowa suddenly has boosted his presidential prospects.

the appointment of a senior envoy to the region, and he signaled support for Israel's anti-terror tactics, including the security barrier Israel is erecting in the West Bank.

"As long as the Palestinian leadership fails to end terror, Israel has a right to take measures to defend itself," Edwards said. "Such defensive measures are not the cause of terrorism — they are the response to terrorism."

Edwards speaks about the war in Iraq and other foreign policy issues in campaign stops, but his real connection with voters comes when discussing social policy.

His platform focuses largely on providing health care for every child, a free year of college education and tax cuts for businesses that keep jobs in the United States.

Edwards has called for changes to the Patriot Act, which some say strips away civil liberties in pursuit of intelligence

to fight terrorism.

In his statement to JTA, Edwards said he supports faith-based charities delivering social services "in a manner consistent with the First Amendment" and said the charities should follow anti-discrimination standards.

Edwards, a Methodist, has a good grasp on the religious politics of his state, friends say.

"Up until the last 15 years, this was a fairly lonely place for Jews and Catholics," Broun said. "I think he understands that."

In his JTA statement, Edwards said, "Faith is enormously important to me personally and to tens of millions of Americans."

Edwards' friends say the candidate is privately spiritual. Cassell said that Elizabeth Edwards "wouldn't let him be any other way."

The couple, married in 1977, have four children. Their eldest daughter, Cate, is a student at Princeton University. They have another daughter, Emma Claire, 4, and a son, Jack, 2.

Baron described Edwards as someone with "a great deal of inner peace."

"I've never seen him look troubled or act troubled," he said. "If he has a bad day, he just moves on to the next one."

Edwards touched the shoulder of each high school student as he talked to them at the Nashua Chamber of Commerce event. He nodded frequently when they talked.

Joshua Black, a Duke University student who interned at Edwards' Washington office last summer, said Edwards has a real connection with youth.

"When I first saw him speak, I saw him as young and vibrant," said Black, who now is president of Duke Students for Edwards. "He's 50 years old, but he looks 35."

Edwards was chosen in 2000 as "Sexiest Politician" by People magazine. Laszlo Mizrahi claims some credit in the selection: It came after she invited a People reporter to a fund raiser for the Women's Campaign Fund in Edwards' Washington home.

# Racism scores at Israeli soccer games

By DINA KRAFT

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Chanting "Death to the Arabs," hundreds of young Jewish soccer fans race up a dusty side street to catch a bus carrying fans of the Arab team that had just beat theirs in a tense game.

The supporters jeer even after the bus pulls away.

Moments earlier, an Arab fan had been hit in the head with a rock, bloodying his forehead.

Welcome to professional soccer in Israel, where racism and violence have become part of the country's most popular sport.

Before Monday's match, the home team, Bnei Yehuda of Tel Aviv's working-class Hatikva neighborhood, was awarded a plaque for being Israel's most tolerant and sportsmanlike team by the New Israel Fund, which has been tracking soccer fan behavior in a new racism index.

The New Israel Fund is an organization that promotes equality, democracy and social justice.

"Today they received a prize, but then because they lose a game this happens," said Nur Ghentos, manager of the victorious Arab team, Bnei Sakhnin, as he watched medics bandage the head of the fan hit by a rock. "It looks like when you are winning you can be tolerant, but when you lose this is the result. This is the story of soccer in Israel."

Before this season began, Bnei Yehuda fans had a reputation for being rowdy and racist. The team had been leading Israel's top league until Monday's loss — and for some Jewish fans, losing to an Arab team is the ultimate insult.

Immediately after the game, fans for the most part were restrained, even applauding briefly for the rival team. New Israel Fund officials noted that the problems began, as they often do, outside the stadium.

Soccer hooliganism in Israel has not reached European levels, but it is very much part of the culture of the game here — something civil society organizations and team officials are trying to change.

Beginning last season, the New Israel Fund racism index has been giving supporters of each team a weekly grade. Volunteers are planted as monitors in the crowds and record the number of racist songs, slogans and incidents they observe.

The results, ranking the most and least tolerant teams, are published weekly in the media and have caused a stir among soccer fans.

Overall, racial incidents are down at soccer matches this season, but the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian violence exacerbates soccer violence, said Yair Galily, a sports sociologist and head of mass media and sports studies at the Zinman College of Israel's Wingate Institute.

Soccer "is a very interesting and authentic reflection of society. We have a violent society relative to other places in world, and we can see it in the soccer violence," Galily said. "Because it comes out in the context of soccer it is legitimized, as if it's OK to get these things out as a catharsis."

The tolerance lacking in the stands can be found on the field, however, where Jews and Arabs often play on the same team.

"On the soccer field is one of the only jobs where you see Arabs and Jews working together," said Eliezer Yaari, executive director of the New Israel Fund in Israel.

Lior Asulin, a Jewish player, scored the winning goal for the Arab team, Bnei Sakhnin. He was cheered and hoisted on his teammates' shoulders as fans roared and whooped.

Racism in Israeli soccer stems mostly from Jewish fans who feel they can shout slogans such as "Death to the Arabs" and "Go to Palestine" without fear of repercussion, experts say.

The same cannot be said for their Arab counterparts. Jews playing on Arab teams say they feel at home on their teams.

The Arab fans "give us lots of respect; there is no racism. They treat us well and we enjoy every minute," Asulin said, smiling as he was slapped on the back after the game by a steady stream of fans.

In a sign of soccer's potential to become a beacon for coexistence, fans of the Nazareth team cheered when Israel's star player, Chaim Revivo, appeared on the field to play for the Jewish team of Ashdod.

The Ashdod fans applauded the Nazareth fans in return.

Last year, a team from the Arab town

of Kafr Kana was invited to play a match in Jordan but were told by the Jordanians that they would have to leave their Jewish players behind.

The Kafr Kana management refused to go without the Jewish players.

At Beitar Jerusalem games, song sheets have been passed out with racist lyrics put to the tune of a popular song. The song was directed at one of Israel's top Arab players, Salim Toameh, who plays for Hapoel Tel Aviv.

"This is the Land of Israel, Toameh. This is the Jewish state. I hate

you Salim Toameh, I hate all the Arabs," the fans sang.

The song now is commonly heard at games across the country.

According to the New Israel Fund racism index, Beitar Jerusalem fans ranked as the most racist.

Beitar Jerusalem spokesman Lior Mai took issue with the index, saying it provoked fans to want to win first place — even as first-place racists.

Racism on the soccer field is not limited to the Arab-Jewish arena. Black players — both Ethiopian Jews and foreign players from Africa — have been taunted with shouts of "Dirty black" and "Go back to the jungle."

Baruch Dago, a Jewish Ethiopian player for Maccabi Tel Aviv, reportedly is considering leaving the team because he is so disheartened by racist slurs hurled at him by his own team's fans.

In the dilapidated streets of the Hatikva neighborhood, Bnei Yehuda is king.

One teenage supporter, catching his breath after running after the bus of Bnei Sakhnin fans, tried to downplay the racism among his fellow fans.

"In the Hatikva neighborhood, we have only one thing to be proud of: Bnei Yehuda. It's not a personal thing between Jews and Arabs," said Ben Ezra, 17.

But his friend, Lior Mizrani, also 17, said racial epithets are part of general tensions.

"We do say these things out of hatred," he said. "It comes from all the terror attacks and shootings and it ends up here, on the soccer field."

Israeli Arab players must endure racist songs and slurs yelled at them by Jewish fans.

## ARTS &amp; CULTURE

## Palestinian film could earn Oscar nomination

By TOM TUGEND

**L**OS ANGELES (JTA) — The ripple effects of Middle East politics are spreading as far as Hollywood's glamour-studded Oscar awards.

On Jan. 27, when the nominations for the Academy Awards are announced, movie makers from 55 countries will be waiting most intently to learn the names of the five finalists in the category of best foreign-language films.

So there was some puzzlement when the "country" of Palestine appeared on this year's list, represented by the film "Divine Intervention."

A year ago, the same film was denied entry by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, leading Arab media outlets to air heated charges of Zionist conspiracies.

But this year the film was accepted for consideration.

"As a basic guideline, we try to be as inclusive as possible, to look for reasons to include, rather than exclude," said producer Mark Johnson, chairman of the Foreign Language Film Selection Committee. "In a perfectly ordered world, we would only accept entries from recognized countries.

"But in reality, we have now entries from Hong Kong, which is part of China, and from Taiwan, which is not recognized by the United Nations."

Johnson's 12-member executive committee voted unanimously to accept "Divine Intervention," directed by Elia Suleiman, an Israeli Arab.

Films made by Israeli Arabs can be considered Palestinian when they are selected by the academy's Palestinian selection committee.

Even film-industry insiders and observers known for their strong pro-Israel stands have not attacked the committee's decision.

Israel's entry this year is "Nina's Tragedies" — a "sad comedy" that largely ignores the country's tribulations and confrontations. ■

## Brothers, born Jews, honored for work as Righteous Gentiles

By PHILIP CARMEL

PARIS (JTA) — Yair Tsaban is very clear about the way he regards Father Alexandre Glasberg, a Jewish-born French Catholic priest named a Righteous Gentile.

"I know of no other person who saved so many people in so many different places over so many years," said Tsaban, a former Knesset member. "I would describe him simply as a lifesaver."

Last week, Glasberg was posthumously awarded the title of Righteous Among the Nations by the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in recognition of his work saving hundreds of Jews in the nonoccupied zone of France during World War II.

Glasberg was honored along with his brother Vila, who after Alexandre's arrest headed the operation to save refugees and provide them with false identities.

The war's end did not mark the end of Alexandre Glasberg's work saving Jews. He continued the effort for another 36 years until his death in 1981.

Glasberg, baptized a Catholic by his parents before the war in his native Ukraine, put himself at considerable risk as he went around the detention camps of Vichy France helping inmates and searching for safe houses from where they could escape deportation to Auschwitz.

According to French Holocaust historian Serge Klarsfeld, Glasberg "directly saved hundreds of Jews" from Nazi death camps and saved thousands more "by his influence on people who had influence in Vichy."

Glasberg was among the founders of Amitie Chretienne, a Christian ecumenical group that linked Catholics and Protestants with Jewish welfare groups trying to save Jews.

The group, which benefited from the patronage of Archbishop Pierre-Marie Gerlier of Lyon, the senior Catholic prelate in Vichy France, placed Jewish refugees with villagers across southern and eastern France.

Many historians say that work was a

major factor in enabling most of France's Jews to escape the Holocaust.

While both Gerlier and other Amitie Chretienne backers initially were strong supporters of Vichy, Glasberg and others were instrumental in turning them into fierce opponents of the regime.

Moreover, by showing the church the horrors of treatment of Jews under Vichy France, the Holocaust-era regime gradually lost backing for anti-Semitic activities in its natural Catholic support base.

"The intervention of Gerlier was very important in saving Jewish lives in the Free Zone," Klarsfeld said, and it was

"Glasberg, who as Gerlier's delegate, helped bring Gerlier round."

Glasberg was responsible for what became known as "The Night of Venissieux," when approximately 500 adults and more than 100 children were saved from deportation from a transit camp set up near Lyon in 1942.

Activities such as this made him a natural target for the Vichy police and the Gestapo. By the end of 1942, Glasberg was forced into hiding.

Vila Glasberg ultimately was also arrested and murdered by the Nazis.

Winning recognition for the Glasberg brothers as Righteous Gentiles was particularly complicated, because both were born Jewish.

Tsaban said there always was a strong Jewish element about Alexandre Glasberg, despite the fact that "whenever I met him he wore a long black cloak with a large cross."

Glasberg's honor at Yad Vashem was promoted by the friends he made in Israel while helping rescue Jews after World War II.

He helped former Knesset speaker Shlomo Hillel bring 12,000 persecuted Iraqi Jews to Israel in the early days of the Jewish state by using connections Glasberg had with Christian monasteries on the Iraq-Iran border.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Glasberg also helped champion the cause of freedom for Jews in the Soviet Union, Tsaban said. ■

**F**ather Glasberg is 'simply a lifesaver.'

**Yair Tsaban**  
Former Knesset member

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## NORTH AMERICA

### Clark: Secularize Saudis

The secularization of Saudi Arabia is key to stability in the Middle East, according to Gen. Wesley Clark.

The former NATO commander and current Democratic candidate for president said that if he wins, he would focus on "importing Western ideas" of freedom to stabilize the region.

"The Saudis must secularize, they must take some of the hatred out of the school systems, some of the religious ideas out of the school systems," Clark told Jewish supporters in a telephone conference call Wednesday.

Clark said similar religious hatred helped poison the Palestinians against Israel and is frustrating peace efforts.

He said President Bush must assume part of the blame for the current impasse between Israel and the Palestinians.

"The Bush administration prefers no policy at all to taking a chance on working for peace in the Middle East," Clark said.

### Pro-Israel billboards slated

A San Francisco group is holding a national contest to design a billboard touting Israel's progressive policies.

Blue Star PR, which is launching the contest at [www.bluestarpr.com](http://www.bluestarpr.com), said the new ad will loom above several highways this spring in a city known for its liberal politics, and where anti-Semitic acts have risen recently.

"We want to create an atmosphere of tolerance by making people aware that many of Israel's policies mirror the Bay Area's social values," said Meirav Yaron, organizer of the contest.

The program is expected to other cities later this year.

### Wolf: P.A. responsible for impasse

The Palestinian failure to stop terrorist attacks against Israel has stymied peace efforts, a top U.S. envoy said.

In rare remarks, John Wolf said he had persuaded Israel to allow the Palestinians some time to crack down on terrorists after an Aug. 19 suicide bombing on a Jerusalem bus that killed more than 20 Israelis.

"I have to say on the Palestinian side it was all talk and no action," the assistant secretary of state told a forum Wednesday in Washington hosted by Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.

That attack effectively killed nascent peace talks. Israel also did not do enough to sustain President Bush's peace efforts last summer, Wolf said, but the principal problem was "no effort by the Palestinian Authority to stop the attacks."

## MIDDLE EAST

### Tehran talks to Israeli

Iranian President Mohammed Khatami told an Israeli reporter that his country wants Middle East peace.

Asked by reporter Menachem Ganz, of Israel's daily Ma'ariv, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on Wednesday whether Iran ever could end its traditional hostility to the Jewish state, Khatami said, "We have a moral problem with Israel because of the occupation."

He added, "However, we do not involve ourselves in the business of others and we will respect the decision of the Palestinian people."

In what could be the first remarks by an Iranian leader to Israeli media, Khatami also said, "What we are interested in is seeing peace reign in the region based on stability and quiet for those of the three

faiths — Jews, Christians and Muslims — allowing them to enjoy normal lives."

### Gaza boy killed

Israeli soldiers killed a 12-year-old Palestinian suspected of trying to infiltrate from the Gaza Strip.

Two other boys were wounded in Thursday's incident, which took place after the army spotted a group of seven Palestinians approaching the Gaza Strip boundary fence with a ladder.

There are frequent infiltration attempts at the site of the shooting, and sometimes terrorists send boys as scouts to test the military's response time.

### Coming and going

Immigrants from the former Soviet Union left Israel at a higher rate during the past decade than other immigrants.

Some 68,000 immigrants from the region, out of the 906,000 who came to Israel between 1990 and 2001, subsequently left the country, Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics reported. A total of 270,000 Israelis emigrated during those years.

### System aims to reduce bombings

Israel reportedly will soon unveil a new system to protect buses from suicide bombings.

The new system will allow drivers to prevent any suspicious passenger from entering the bus.

Electronic gates will be installed on the back of the buses to prevent people from sneaking on.

## WORLD

### Sharansky warns Italians

Natan Sharansky warned Italy's senate about the rise of a new form of anti-Semitism in Europe.

Sharansky, Israel's minister for Diaspora affairs, told JTA by telephone that the Italian response to his speech — in which he said that "classical" Jew hatred was being transferred to hatred of the Jewish state — was a "pleasant surprise." He said, "I don't know of any other country where I could make such a strong statement and be met with such understanding."

During his brief stay in Italy, Sharansky also had what he called "frank" discussions with senior Vatican officials about how the Catholic Church can help fight anti-Semitism.

### Irish leader meets Jews

A delegation of international Jewish leaders met with Ireland's prime minister.

Meeting in Dublin with Bertie Aherne, whose country recently took over the rotating presidency of the European Union, the high-profile delegation discussed such issues as the monitoring and publication of statistics across Europe on anti-Semitic acts, promotion of an Irish U.N. resolution against anti-Semitism, and European Union policy toward the Middle East.

Representatives of the European Jewish Congress and World Jewish Congress, as well as Irish and British Jewish bodies, were present.

### Jewish graves desecrated

Jewish war graves were desecrated in northern France.

Two gravestones marked with Stars of David were damaged in the World War I cemetery in Villiers-au-bois, close to the English Channel coast, the French daily Liberation reported Thursday. More than 1,000 British soldiers of all faiths are buried at the site.