

IN THE NEWS

McGreevey resigns in scandal with Israeli

New Jersey's governor resigned amid reports of a sexual harassment lawsuit filed by an Israeli man who served as liaison to the Jewish community.

James McGreevey announced Thursday he was resigning after admitting that he was gay and had had an affair with a man.

According to ABC News, that man is Golan Cipel, an Israeli who served as the governor's homeland security adviser and later as Jewish community liaison.

Former envoy breaching contract?

Israel's former consul general to New York may have broken his diplomatic contract by agreeing to head a U.S. Jewish group.

Alon Pinkas, who recently accepted the CEO position at the American Jewish Congress, may have broken an Israeli Foreign Ministry contract that requires former diplomats to wait two years before working for a group they had contact with during their tenure.

The waiting period can be waived only with approval from Israel's public service commissioner. Juda Engelmeyer, AJCongress' spokesman, said Pinkas would not start the new position with the group until his visa is changed from a diplomatic passport to a regular one.

A wider withdrawal from the West Bank?

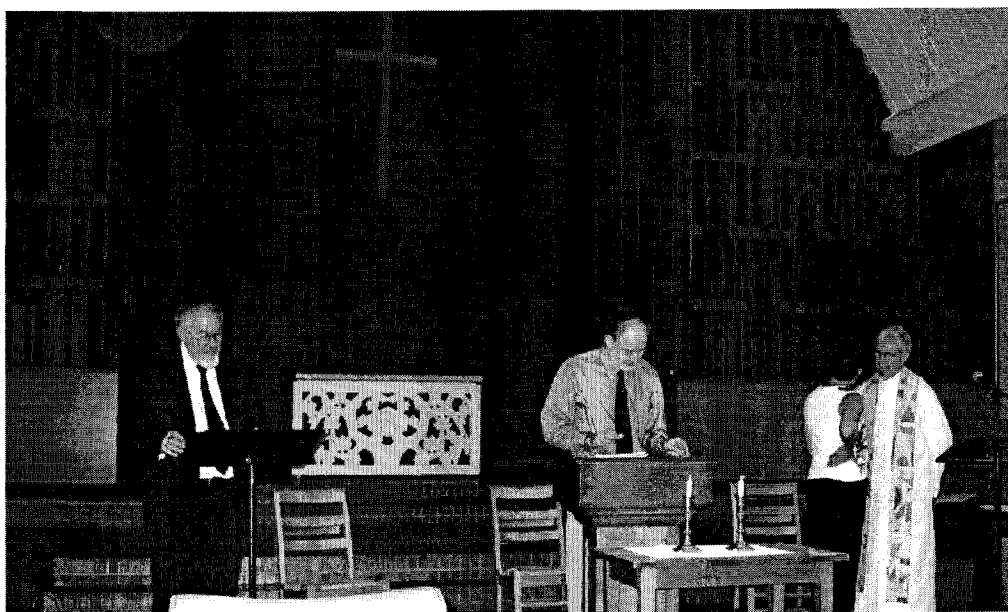
Israel likely will evacuate more than the four West Bank settlements slated for removal under its withdrawal plan, an Israeli Cabinet minister said.

"In the future there will be a need to evacuate more communities in Judea and Samaria, not because it is the right thing to do, but because there is no alternative if we are to remain a Jewish and democratic state," Ehud Olmert told settler leaders Thursday.

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WORLD REPORT

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Sue Fishkoff

Cantor Oscar Rosenbloom, left, Rabbi Yeshaia Charles Familant, center, and Father John Hester lead Shabbat services in the chapel at the Pacific School of Religion last week in Berkeley, Calif.

Raising Jewish-Christian children: Some interfaith families go for both

By SUE FISHKOFF

BERKELEY, Calif. (JTA) — When Ned and Mary Rosenbaum got married in 1963, they told the officiating priest that they planned to raise their children in both the Jewish and Catholic faiths.

"He said that was perfectly awful," recalls Ned, who is Jewish.

But he and his wife persevered, taking their three children to church and synagogue, teaching them the values and traditions of both faiths, sending them to Hebrew school and Sunday school, though not at the same time.

"They had to choose each year, and commit to going for that entire year," says Ned,

who taught Jewish studies at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa., for 28 years.

It wasn't easy, Mary admits.

"Raising children in both faiths only works if both partners are actively involved in their own religion," she says. "To do it successfully you have to be really interested in religion and willing to spend a lot of time and energy. It's not just Christmas and Chanukah."

Today, Mary Rosenbaum, still a practicing Catholic, is executive director of the Dovetail Institute for Interfaith Family Resources, a Kentucky-based organization that provides emotional support and practical information for interfaith couples trying

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**FOCUS
ON
ISSUES**

■ *Raising Jewish-Christian kids: Some interfaith families opt for both*

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to make sense of their dual heritages.

With close to 700 active members, and a mailing list of 12,000, virtually all of them Jewish-Christian intermarrieds, the Dovetail Institute is believed to be the largest such organization in the country.

About 100 people attended the group's biennial conference Aug. 6-8 in Berkeley, Calif., where they explored with rabbis, ministers, sociologists and other experts such themes as educating interfaith children, creating baby-welcoming ceremonies, holding meaningful holiday services and finding clergy to conduct rituals.

■
Sari and Blake McConnell, an intermarried San Francisco Bay area couple with one 16-month-old son, came to the conference "to take a lot of notes," Sari says. She is Jewish and Blake is Presbyterian.

They belong to a church and a synagogue, and a mohel performed a brit milah, or ritual circumcision, on their son, and a pastor conducted a welcoming ceremony.

This young couple says they "definitely" want to raise their children in both faiths, even though they know it will be hard.

"If your religion is important to you, that also takes work," Sari says.

At the conference, a workshop session on interfaith schools discuss the "Big Question" — how to teach about Jesus in a way that won't offend Jewish sensibilities.

Jewish groups "feel threatened" by interfaith alternatives, says Eve Edwards of Maclean, Va. "They feel it takes their

people away. But that's not true; these people would be nothing instead."

Nehama Ben-Mosche, a doctoral candidate in Jewish education at the Jewish Theological Seminary, describes the fourth-grade curriculum at one of these schools, the Interfaith Community in Manhattan, where she acts as an adviser.

The classes are team-taught by a Jewish and a Christian educator, and the children read from both Hebrew and Christian scriptures. They learn the Shema and the Lord's Prayer, they discuss the story of Noah's Ark, the binding of Isaac and the crucifixion.

"We have to be careful of the language we use, that it be inclusionary and not exclusionary," she says.

Of all the topics Dovetail deals with, the one that generates the most controversy is the notion of raising children of interfaith couples in both parents' religions. While Dovetail does not advocate that approach, officials say, it provides support and resources for families who choose this path.

Mary Rosenbaum, the group's executive director, estimates that about half the group's members make this choice. The other half, she says, raise their children Jewish, as Dovetail founder Joan Hawxhurst does. A few choose a third option, such as Unitarianism or ethical humanism.

Very few couples in the group raise their children as Christians exclusively.

■
Most of the criticism Rosenbaum hears comes from the Jewish community. Alongside Jews' very real fear of disappearing through assimilation or attrition, she says, "Judaism tends to emphasize the needs of the community, while Christianity is more concerned with the individual soul."

Dru Greenwood, outreach director for the Union of Reform Judaism, says that the goal of Reform outreach to the intermarried is quite clearly "the hope that couples will choose Judaism for their family."

Even when that is not possible, she says, the Reform movement urges intermarried couples to choose one religious identity for their children.

Ed Case, president and publisher of

Interfaithfamily.com, a non-profit that seeks to encourage intermarried couples to raise their children Jewish, agrees.

"First, I don't think it's possible to be both Jewish and Christian. There's a theo-

logical inconsistency. Second, we hear from children that it's confusing. They feel torn between two religious communities, and are not really part of either," says Case, who is intermarried and raises his children Jewish.

■
Adds Greenwood: "There are good ways to honor and respect the cultural

heritage of both parents in an interfaith home. Raising children to be both Jewish and Christian is not one of them."

That's not what Dovetail members are doing, the Rosenbaums maintain.

"We raised our kids with both religions, not in them," Ned says. Their hope was that when the children grew up, they would choose. Their daughter Sarah did, converting to Judaism. Their two sons are still unaffiliated.

■
The Rosenbaums' experience appears typical of other Dovetail members, who give their children all the tools they can, believing that it will strengthen rather than confuse them.

"Kids are really sharp," says Debi Tenner, an intermarried mother of two teenagers who both chose Judaism. "They can understand the concept of having serious roots in two very different religions."

The important thing, these families say, is for parents to make a united decision, and stick to it. If the parents are confused about what they want, the children will be as well.

"We want our kids to choose," says Mike Farnon, a leader in Chicago's Family School, an interfaith school with 150 students.

"Most of our graduates have chosen one or the other."

But in some interfaith communities, syncretism is more common.

"We have kids whose parents teach them they are interfaith, who set them up so they won't go through the process of choosing," says Ben-Mosche of Manhattan's Interfaith Community.

'Kids are really sharp. They can understand the concept of having serious roots in two very different religions.'

Debi Tenner
Interfaith mother

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Program links Israeli and Palestinian campers

By DINA KRAFT

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Abdullah Awad, 15, hunches over a glowing computer screen searching for the right code to improve the interface of an E-commerce Web site.

A few computers away, Miri Cohen, also 15, learns how to make a Web page's content change.

Both Abdullah and Miri are from the Jerusalem area, although he is from traditionally Arab eastern Jerusalem and she is from the western part of Israel's capital.

They live only a few miles away from each other, but it is only here, at a computer camp run and taught by students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, that Abdullah, Miri and their fellow campers — an even split of 30 Palestinian and Israeli teenagers — have come together.

For most, computers and top-rate instruction are the draw of this five-week camp, housed in the sleek air-conditioned computer labs and classrooms of Hebrew University's computer science department.

But for the majority of those taking part in the camp, which ends this week, it is also the first time they are interacting with Israelis and Palestinians their own age.

"I never thought I would get to be close with Israeli kids. Now when you see us working together, it is hard to know who is an Israeli and who is an Arab," Abdullah says.

Working in small teams, speaking only in English, and executing the Java programming language they are studying every day, the initial barriers begin to break down.

All either 14 or 15, the campers troubleshoot problems, sketch out ideas, tap out code on computer keyboards and even race each other outside on a green lawn.

The idea for the camp, which is in its first year, grew out of Yaron Binur's experiences teaching Kenyan youth computer programming as part of MIT's Africa Internet Technology Initiative.

An Israeli who is finishing his undergraduate degree at MIT, Binur felt an obligation to make a difference at home, too.

"I believe we can use technology to bridge some divides here," says Binur, who adds that the main concept behind the program is how to best use "technology and education to promote coexistence and collaboration."

Looking on as the campers laugh and talk at the end of another nine-hour day of lectures and programming, he muses about what the experience will give them.

The camp is a pilot project he, his sister and a friend, Assaf Harlap, have established as part of a larger program they call MEET, or Middle East Education Through Technology.

There are plans for the teenagers to continue meeting throughout the school year as they work on projects they started at camp.

Next year they hope to expand the camp to include an advanced course in Java for this year's campers and two more beginning classes.

Israeli high-tech employees are planning to mentor the children throughout the year, working on projects ranging from IM networks that can translate between Hebrew and Arabic to the E-commerce Web site for Israeli and Palestinian companies.

At the camp, the instructors try to impress on the teens that what they are learning this summer is key to their future professional development in a technological world where the shared language is teamwork, English and regional cooperation.

"I'm sure not all of them are going to be best friends, but I think we have broken down a lot of misconceptions," Binur says.

"So they can see it is possible to work with the other side, that it is possible to find compromise."

Cohen, who lives in the leafy Jerusalem neighborhood of Beit Hakerem and loves math and science, says she came to the camp looking for friends and experience in computer programming.

"It's been a really powerful experience," she explains, saying it is the first time she has had Palestinian friends.

"We feel the same emotions, thoughts. Some things in our cultures are different

but mostly we are similar," she says.

Miri says politics only rarely comes up in conversation. Usually they talk about computers, school — and what they do on the weekends.

But when politics does emerge, things suddenly go tense, she says. Miri recalls an argument the previous day between a Palestinian girl who insisted on referring to Israel as Palestine and two Israeli boys who spoke out in protest.

Max Goldman, one of the camp's instructors, says he is not surprised politics occasionally emerges.

"It should come up. It would be ridiculous if it didn't come up," says Goldman, who graduated this spring from MIT. But it is the coming together of the campers that most moves him.

"On the first day, the splits were very clear and now the splits are not so clear," he says, rattling off a list of who is friends with whom and who is working together.

The campers attend camp for free; their tuition and the program itself is funded by MIT's computer science department, Israeli high tech companies, Germany's Daimler-Chrysler, and individual Jewish donors from the United States and Britain.

The Hebrew University has donated the use of their computers and classroom and lab space.

In addition to lectures on Java and tutorials with instructors, campers have also gone on field trips to Intel's offices in Israel, the Technion — Israeli Institute of Technology in Haifa and the national science museum.

Sima Hindiyeh, 14, from the eastern Jerusalem neighborhood of Beit Hanina, looks intently at the computer screen while typing in HTML text to create a personal home page.

She says she hopes maybe it will be technology that will bring peace to the Middle East.

"Maybe one day we will have a program that will help bring peace," she says.

"Maybe a person will make such a program, maybe that person will be me." She claps her hands at the thought.

A high-tech program teaches tolerance to teens.

Greek Jews are heirs to a proud tradition

By JEAN COHEN

ATHENS (JTA) — Although the largest Jewish community in Greece resides in Athens, Jews from Salonika — remnants of a once-thriving community — are more active and cohesive.

In Salonika, known in Greek as Thessaloniki, where 1,000 of the country's 5,000 Jews live today, the synagogue has a regular minyan and younger Jews gather at the local Jewish community center.

But even these activities are a far cry from what Jews have meant to the city — and what the city has meant to Jews — during the approximately 2,400 years of Jewish life in Greece.

The first Greek Jew whose name is known was "Moschos, son of Moschion the Jew," a slave identified in an inscription dated to approximately 300 BCE-250 BCE. The inscription was unearthed in Oropos, a small coastal town between Athens and Boeotia.

The Jewish community is believed to have grown further after the Hasmonean uprising, when many Jews were sold into slavery in Greece.

During the Hellenistic period, a Jewish community formed mainly in Thessaloniki, where Jews concentrated in an area near the city port. The center of both their social and religious lives was the synagogue.

Later, the Romans granted autonomy to the Jewish community which was comprised largely of traders, craftsmen, farmers and silk growers.

This ancient community came to be known as the Romaniotes, some of whose descendants still live in Greece today.

During the 15th and 16th centuries, many Jews expelled from Spain, Portugal, Italy, Sicily and France, as well as refugees from North Africa, settled in Salonika. Once there, the Romaniote and Sephardi communities founded separate shuls.

By the mid-16th century, Salonika — once known as the "Jerusalem of the Balkans" — had become a Jewish center of Europe, as persecuted Jews poured in.

In 1900 there were approximately 80,000 Jews in Salonika out of a total population of 173,000.

In the early 20th century, the city was under Turkish rule, and after the Turkish sultan was overthrown by republicans

known as the Young Turks, Jews in the city entered a "golden era" in which they could be found in almost every profession.

By the eve of World War II there were more than 20 Zionist organizations in the city.

But at the same time, increasing competition in the job market during the first decades of the 20th century motivated thousands of Jews to emigrate, largely to the United States.

The war itself was a disaster for the community. The Nazi army occupied the city on April 9, 1941. In early 1943,

all of the city's Jews were herded into ghettos; later that year they were deported.

All told, 43,850 Jews, 95 percent of the Salonikan Jewish population, were deported from Salonika. Out of 77,377 Jews in Greece, only 10,000 survived the Holocaust.

Today, there are nine active Jewish communities in Greece: Athens; Thessaloniki, or Salonika; Larissa; Chalkis; Volos; Corfu; Trikala; Ioannina; and Rhodes.

In three former communities, synagogues hold regular services — and in Athens and Salonika there are Jewish schools.

The Jewish Museum of Greece, founded in Athens in 1977, preserves the heritage of the community.

As elsewhere in the world, intermarriage is common among Greek Jews, who are generally assimilated and well-off and work in business or in white-collar professions.

Many observers say that anti-Semitism in Greece today is on the rise. Most



Noel Kessel/Australian Jewish News

Olympic triple gold medal U.S. swimmer Lenny Krayzelburg is among the top Jewish athletes competing in this year's Olympic Games. He got his start swimming at a JCC in Los Angeles shortly after his family arrived here in 1988 from the Soviet Union.

instances of anti-Semitism have appeared in fringe papers and electronic media of the extreme right.

One or two mainstream papers, such as Eleftherotypia and Ta Nea, do occasionally carry anti-Semitic cartoons, mainly when they are trying to criticize Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon or Israeli policies.

International Jewish groups have been quick to criticize the Greek government for not reacting to increased anti-Semitism, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center issued a travel advisory urging Jewish travelers to avoid visiting Greece for the upcoming Olympic Games, which get under way on Aug. 13.

Perhaps in reaction to the criticism, Greece recently announced that it would establish a national day of remembrance for Greek Jews who died in the Holocaust.

Greece's Interior Ministry said it will submit legislation to Parliament that would make Jan. 27 — the day prisoners were liberated from Auschwitz — a "Day of Remembrance of Greek Jewish Holocaust Victims."

THE 2004 OLYMPICS

GREEK JEWISH HISTORY AND TRIVIA

- Earliest known Jewish settlement in Greece: Third Century BCE
- Estimated number of Jews in Greece on eve of World II: 77,000
- Estimated number of Jews in Greece today: 5,000
- Most important "Jewish city" in Greece: Salonika
- Number of Greek Jews who arrived in North America between 1908 and 1924: 30,000
- Cities with significant Greek Jewish communities in North America: New York City area, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle and Atlanta

Ladino, borekas, coffee: Greek Jews in the U.S.

By ALANA B. ELIAS KORNFIELD

NEW YORK (JTA) — When Marion Crespi was a young girl, she had a hard time convincing other Jews that she was Jewish.

"My mother's friends would call me 'Italianika,' the Italian girl," says Crespi, 75. "They thought we were Italian because our names ended in vowels and we didn't speak Yiddish."

Crespi's family was not alone. By 1924, 30,000 Greek Jewish immigrants lived on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

Greek Jews, who spoke Ladino in addition to Greek, left for North America beginning in 1900 mainly because of economics. "They wanted to earn," Crespi says. "There was no middle class in Greece, but in America the middle class thrived. In Greece you were either poor or rich, and the two groups didn't associate."

When they arrived in North America, most Greek Jews learned the needle trade because Kastoria, Greece, was one of the world's fur capitals.

Today many Greek Jews — significant communities live in the New York area, Seattle and Los Angeles — are doctors, lawyers and accountants, says Crespi, who lives on Long Island.

Greek Jews — who are called either Romaniote or Sephardi depending on the

origins of their families prior to immigrating to Greece — incorporated Greek culture and language into their practice of Judaism.

Romaniote Jews left Israel for Greece at the time of the Romans.

Sephardi Jews living in Spain at the time first immigrated to Greece after they were expelled from Spain during the Inquisition of 1492, according to Randall Belinfante, a librarian and archivist for the American Sephardi Federation in New York.

However, with the large influx of Sephardi Jews to Greece in the year 1492, Romaniote Jews adopted much of the Sephardi culture.

In their synagogue services, Romaniote Jews pray both in Hebrew and Greek while Sephardi Jews pray in Hebrew and Ladino — a hybrid of Hebrew and Spanish.

"Romaniote Jews absorbed the culture of their Greek Christian neighbors, digested it, accommodated it to their Jewish traditions, then created their unique and distinctive interpretation of it," said Marcia Haddad Ikononopoulos, the president of the Association of the Friends of Greek Jewry in New York.

Sephardi synagogues have a distinctive set-up.

"The bimah is placed in the center of the room opposite the pulpit rather than the front," Belinfante said, referring to the difference from the traditional Ashkenazi placement. "Also Sephardi Jews raise the Torah at the beginning of the reading instead of the end."

After Shabbat services, Greek Jews eat borekas — phyllo dough-wrapped pastries filled with cheese and spinach or potato — hard-boiled eggs and coffee.

Although in America Greek Jews hold onto their culture, many do not consider themselves religious.

"Many of us don't observe kashrut laws, but the customs are still the same, they are more or less embedded in us," Crespi says. "The culture my generation learned from our upbringing, our children observe on certain occasions and they pass it onto their children. This is why I truly feel the customs will always survive."

What Greek Jews may lack in religious observance, they make up for in dedication to their Greek roots.

"Greek Jews have pride for the 2004 Olympics in Athens because we are very proud of the country we came from," Crespi says. "Greek Jews from this country still send money to support the synagogue and museum in Greece and take care of old graves."

Where are all the athletes? Jews gone from Russian sports

By LEV KRICHEVSKY

MOSCOW (JTA) — Jewish emigration to Israel has bolstered the Jewish state's Olympic team, but it has greatly reduced the number of Jews competing for the Russians in the upcoming Athens Games.

In the 40 years following the 1952 Helsinki Games — in which the Soviet Union competed for the first time — Jews won at least 60 medals for the Soviet Olympic team, including 28 golds.

Soviet Jews were especially successful in fencing — taking home seven Olympic golds — in addition to wrestling and yachting, in which they won three gold medals respectively.

The peak of Jewish Olympic victories for the Soviet team came during the 1960s and 1970s: Of the 28 gold medals Jews won for the USSR between 1952 and 1992, 18 were garnered between 1960 and 1976. After that period, Jewish participation began to decline as a result of state-sponsored anti-Semitism.

As for the Athens Games, which begin Aug. 13, Sergei Sharikov, 30, who won two Olympic saber fencing golds in 1996 and in 2000, is the only confirmed Jewish athlete on the Russian team. Sharikov declined to be interviewed, saying he never gives

interviews before important competitions.

Mark Rakita, honorary president of Maccabi Russia, who won an Olympic gold medal in fencing in 1964 in Tokyo, said that "some of the athletes may not be open about their Jewish roots," although he added that the situation today cannot be compared to his own experience 40 years ago as a leading Russian fencer.

"In my time people were hiding this, were ashamed of being Jewish. In order to be able to compete on par with the others I had to be really better than many others," he said.

Because of state anti-Semitism, Rakita said the Soviet award he received as a winner of Olympic gold was lower in status than that of other Olympic gold-medal winners.

"Thankfully, this issue is over now, and the Jewish athletes in Russia don't feel any pressure of that kind any more," Rakita said.

Sergey Tankilevich, head of the Moscow branch of Maccabi, told JTA that his group has lately been unable to find many new young athletes because of funding constraints.

Tankilevich said many younger athletes are emigrating to Israel because diminished competition there has made it easier for aspiring athletes to "get to the top."

Attacks a wake-up call for New Zealand Jews

By MIRIAM BELL

AUCKLAND, New Zealand (JTA) — They were deeply disturbing images to wake up to on a mid-winter Friday morning: more than 90 desecrated gravestones, a burnt-out prayer house and two swastikas — one emblazoned on a wall, the other carved into the ground among the fallen headstones.

Even more disturbing was the fact that these images didn't come from Europe or the Middle East, but from normally placid New Zealand, from Makara cemetery in Wellington, the capital.

For a society that prides itself on fairness and tolerance, the attack was a shock that left Jews and non-Jews alike wondering who could have done such a thing, and how it could happen in a "God-zone."

Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence said many members of his Auckland Hebrew Congregation were distressed by the attack, the second such desecration in weeks.

"It's an incredibly emotive attack on consecrated ground. Every culture understands our ancestors are not to be touched — it violates the whole idea of 'rest in peace.' And it evokes the most terrible memories, especially for the older generation, of the past," Lawrence said.

But for many, Lawrence suggested, the most disturbing aspect may be the realization that New Zealand is not immune from anti-Semitism.

"As a Jew here, where people felt comfortable, secure and non-threatened for so long, suddenly there have been a number of not necessarily connected incidents which have made Jews in New Zealand more aware they are Jews in New Zealand," he said.

■
The desecrations follow a highly publicized trial of two Israelis who fraudulently tried to obtain a New Zealand passport. With public sentiment already turning strongly anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian, Prime Minister Helen Clark accused the men of being Mossad agents and imposed diplomatic sanctions on Israel, which has refused to confirm or deny that the men worked for its intelligence services.

That followed a spat over fiercely anti-Israeli — and, some said, anti-Semitic — drawings by a New Zealand editorial cartoonist, as well as a dispute over whether to allow Holocaust denier David Irving to give speeches in the country.

New Zealand does not have a history of overt anti-Semitism. Lately, however, there has been a public shift in perceptions of Israel, said John Barnett, a prominent member of the Jewish community.

"This shift can be seen in the media and at government levels," Barnett said, "and there is no doubt that for many people, being Jewish is synonymous with Israel."

A film and television producer best known for the international movie hit "Whale Rider," Barnett believes New Zealand has changed from a strong supporter and friend of Israel to a country that sees Israel as an aggressor and the Palestinians as underdogs in the Middle East.

Barnett said "lunatic fringes" may have felt emboldened by Clark's outburst against Israel after the passport affair.

"I don't think Clark thought her words would do any such thing. She's a decent person who doesn't set out to hurt people," Barnett says. "But her comments say to some people that it's fair game to commit acts like this."

■
There has been much debate about Clark's motives for making such strong statements on the affair.

Speculation ranges from a desire to present herself as a strong leader to trade considerations.

Opinions vary widely even within the Jewish community. At one end of the scale, some believe Clark's administration is extremely anti-Israel; at the other, there's the more cynical perception that Clark used the affair to distract voters from political problems at home.

David Zwartz, president of the country's Jewish Council and Israel's honorary consul in New Zealand, also said Clark's comments could have been a trigger for the cemetery attacks.

"There has been a long-term hardening of governmental policy towards Israel, and the government is now less sympathetic than it ever has been," he said.

Zwartz points out a number of diplomatically unfriendly actions on the part of government members. They include Foreign Minister Phil Goff's visit to Yass-

er Arafat — Israel has asked world leaders to stop meeting the Palestinian Authority president because of his ties to terrorism

— and New Zealand's recent voting pattern on United Nations resolutions relating to Israel.

"The intifada has not been well-reported here. There hasn't been balanced coverage at all," Zwartz said. "And that has built up a certain amount of antipathy toward Israel and, by

extension, the Jewish community here, because people have never been very good at distinguishing between the two."

■
Government reaction was immediate, with Michael Cullen, the acting prime minister, calling the attack ugly, unforgivable and "totally unacceptable." Minister for Ethnic Affairs Chris Carter submitted a proposal to Parliament for a resolution denouncing anti-Semitism, and the resolution passed unanimously Tuesday.

But a sampling of talk programs and Internet chat rooms reveals darker sentiments about Zionist conspiracy theories and Jews complaining too much. For some New Zealand Jews, the slowness to comment on the part of some notable social and media commentators — or even their outright silence — speaks volumes.

So the community itself must become more vocal, said Janine Gaddie, a student at the University of Auckland.

"There's a lot of indifference here until it's close to home and hits you directly," Gaddie said. "New Zealanders don't tend to be politically active, so there has to be some action people really take notice of."

Gaddie, who is president of the local chapter of the Australasian Union of Jewish Students, decided it was time for her organization to act last weekend. Some 700 posters denouncing the cemetery desecration and requesting an end to hatred were plastered around three Auckland campuses.

"Within the Jewish community, there's been a lot of support toward us for taking the lead," she says. "The Jewish community has been quite silent before, so there is genuine gratitude to AUJS for trying to address the issue and bring it to public

'Every culture understands our ancestors are not to be touched.'

Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence
Auckland Hebrew Congregation

ARTS & CULTURE

For Palestinians, it's more theater and fewer bombs

By DINA KRAFT

RAMALLAH, West Bank (JTA) — In flows the audience: fathers holding toddlers' hands, teenage girls in head scarves and blue jeans, young couples exchanging glances.

They all stream up the wide stone staircase leading into the gleaming new Ramallah Cultural Palace to see "Al Fawanees," or "The Little Lantern," which is being billed as the first large-scale piece of musical theater in a Palestinian area.

Inside the air-conditioned, wood-paneled theater, trombones, violins and ouds tune up amid the buzz of whispers. The whispers snap into silence when 60 children in satin robes take their place on a stage glowing with colored spotlights.

Playing to sold-out audiences, the musical, which played this week, marks a resurgence of cultural life in Ramallah, where four years of the intifada have taken a toll on this bustling city considered the center of West Bank Palestinian life.

During the first intifada, from 1987 to 1993, and in the early part of the uprising that began in the fall of 2000, entertainment and cultural events were shunned as frivolous distractions.

Now, though, the mood has shifted and the arts are viewed as a way to express feelings about the conflict. The musical, based on a fairy tale by the Palestinian author Ghassan Kanafi, tells the story of a young princess grappling with the will of her late father. He has challenged her to bring the sun into the palace as a condition for becoming queen of the kingdom.

Eventually, the princess wins and orders the walls of the castle to be torn down.

The symbolism of the story in today's reality is two-fold, said Suhail Koury. The walls, says Koury, the director of the National Conservatory of Music — Palestine, who produced the show, symbolizes "the actual wall of Israel and the wall of dictatorship which we have a little bit of here and a lot of in the Arab world."

He adds, "It's also a fairy tale for the kids."

Dating Jewish on Capitol Hill

By JUSTIN BOSCH

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Like many online dating profiles, this one tantalizes mysteriously.

The prospect, identified only as "Steve3366," seems powerful: A government employee with a six-figure salary, he has pursued a life of civil service and works in Washington. He's been a member since March and even logged on several times this week.

If you want to see his pictures, you can sign up to become a member of JDate, an online dating service for Jewish singles — or you can visit the congressional Web site of Rep. Steve Rothman (D-N.J.).

"This is simply what modern people do to meet nice people in addition to being set up on dates," the four-term "midway moderate" told JTA.

Rothman's story highlights the unusual position that a member of Congress faces trying to meet and date people — and how those obstacles multiply when the search is narrowed to Jewish confines.

Pursuing a romantic relationship exposes Jewish single politicians to unknown people, and perhaps to those who could harm their careers.

Rothman protected himself by trusting family members to set him up with women, but eventually sought more autonomy and efficiency for his busy lifestyle, he said.

"The reason why all of these Internet dating sites are so enormously successful is that people out of their 20s and 30s have children and have busy careers," he said. "It's meeting a need for people of all ages who find themselves very busy in our 21st century world."

Divorced for nine years and hoping to get remarried, Rothman sought a way to meet Jewish women while maintaining his commitments to his two teenage children and the people of his district.

The devoted father's career consumed much of his time and, he said, his ethics prevented him from dating women with whom he worked in his official capacity. Siblings set up dates for him, but he sought more control over both the selection and his own time. The results so far are promising, he said. "I have found it to be a very good way to meet some very interesting

and wonderful women," Rothman said.

Online dating Web sites have exploded in popularity, providing persons of power and prestige the opportunity to discreetly pursue romance in a way that the noisy bar scene could not. But despite going mainstream, their public perception still lags, carrying a perceived stigma.

Rothman is also a member of a small class: 31 of the 37 Jewish members of Congress are married. He and Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) are divorced. Sen. Herb Kohl (D-Wis.), Reps. Brad Sherman (D-Cal.) and Anthony Weiner (D-N.Y.) are single and Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), who is gay, is in a long-term relationship.

Capitol Hill may be a stressful setting, but it is not necessarily hostile to Jewish singles. Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-Nev.) met her husband while running for Congress, succeeding in both overcoming the drag of politics but also in forging a bipartisan marriage.

During her first run for Congress, a mutual friend introduced her to what he called "a Jewish doctor with money" and encouraged interest on

both sides.

"Being programmed my entire life to go out with a Jewish doctor with money, it seemed irresponsible to say no," said Berkley, who had been divorced for five years.

Larry Lehrner came with one caveat: He was a Republican, he confessed on their first date at a pizzeria. She resisted his entreaties because of her reluctance to pursue a relationship in tandem with her political career.

But Lehrner persisted, showering her with roses and marriage proposals.

"He kept asking me to marry him; so I agreed," Berkley said. "It was the smartest thing I ever did. I have his support and I get a Republican vote every election."

For his part, Rothman has "met a number of very accomplished and intelligent women" on JDate and has been dating one of those women now for months, although he declined to reveal more.

In his profile, Rothman checks "no" in the "would you move for a new love?" question. But would he move if his district were changed after the 2010 census?

"I'm safe for another eight years," he said.

A Jewish congressman looks for love over the Internet.

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORLD

French hold solidarity rally in Lyon

Some 1,000 people gathered in France near a site where Jewish tombstones were desecrated. Wednesday's rally took place near a Jewish war memorial at a Lyon cemetery following the desecration of some 60 tombstones earlier this week.

The meeting called by the Lyon Consistoire and the city's chief rabbinate was attended by local political figures, including the president of the Lyon regional council and the city's archbishop.

The head of the region's Muslim Council read a declaration condemning the desecration on behalf of all the city's religious leaders.

International memorial planned for Jerusalem

Victims of anti-Jewish terrorism worldwide are to be honored at Israel's main state cemetery.

The memorial will be erected at Mount Herzl cemetery in Jerusalem, the Jewish Agency for Israel said Thursday.

"A memorial for the victims of terrorist acts directed against Jews all over the world reflects the centrality of Israel and the country's overall responsibility for all Jews, as well as the shared fate of the State of Israel and the Jewish people," said the agency's chairman, Sallai Meridor.

French students can stay in school

A French court on Wednesday upheld the reinstatement of two students expelled for attacking a Jewish child at a high school.

The Ministry of Education had appealed a June decision by a lower court that reinstated the two students and awarded them damages for what it regarded as an exaggerated punishment. Two 11-year-old boys, described as being of North African origin, had attacked a fellow student at Paris' prestigious Lycee Montaigne last year.

One of the students called the Jewish child "a minus" and was expelled for physical assault.

The other, who used the term "dirty Jew," was expelled for assisting the attack and for anti-Semitism.

But the appeals court said the school was wrong in expelling the students without warning them.

UNESCO prods Tajikistan on synagogue

A U.N. agency is pressuring Tajik authorities to preserve the only synagogue in that nation's capital, which is slated for demolition.

In response to a request in June by the World Jewish Congress, UNESCO — the U.N. arm that deals with historic preservation matters — contacted authorities in Tajikistan to advise them that demolishing the synagogue would "be in contradiction with existing international standards for the protection of cultural heritage."

NORTH AMERICA

Nader defends Israel commentary

Ralph Nader defended comments suggesting that the Bush administration and the U.S. Congress are "puppets" of the Israeli government.

"As you know, there is far more freedom in the media, in town squares and among citizens, soldiers, elected representatives and academicians in Israel to debate and discuss the Israeli-Palestinian conflict than there is in the United States," the independent presidential candidate wrote to Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, who had criticized Nader's remarks.

Nader suggests in the letter that mainstream Jewish organizations should be more concerned about the plight of Palestinians.

"How often, if ever, has the United States — either the Congress or the White House — pursued a course of action, since 1956, that contradicted the Israeli government's position?"

Nader posted the letter Thursday on his campaign's Web site.

Koch blasts Reform leaders

Ed Koch blasted Reform movement leaders for suggesting pro-Israel resolutions in Congress should express concern about Palestinian humanitarian issues.

In a letter to David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism, a copy of which was obtained by JTA, the former New York City mayor said Jews are their own worst enemies.

"It shouldn't surprise anyone that Palestinian supporters would send a letter with criticism of the support by the president for the State of Israel," Koch, a Democratic supporter of President Bush, told JTA. "But when Jews do it, they are in fact injuring the State of Israel."

Mark Pelavin, the Religious Action Center's associate director, said its letter last week to U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed support for the Bush administration, U.S. engagement in the Middle East and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Gaza withdrawal plan.

"I don't think it's anti-Israel to note that Palestinians have legitimate concerns," Pelavin said.

Some Presbyterians stand with Israel

A Presbyterian group is distancing itself from recent decisions by the Presbyterian Church on Israel and proselytizing Jews.

A group called Presbyterians Concerned for Jewish Christian Relations issued a statement Wednesday saying it was distressed that the church's General Assembly adopted a statement calling for proselytizing Jews and divesting from Israel.

"It is easy to understand the public outcry and sense of betrayal within the Jewish community," the statement said.

It noted that the church's actions "lacked balance and failed to condemn the terrorism to which the people of Israel have been subjected."

MIDDLE EAST

New test for Arrow-2

Israel plans a second live test of its Arrow-2 missile-killer system. Security sources said Thursday that the test would take place in coming months and would seek to improve on the Arrow-2's performance after it shot down a Scud missile off the California coast last month.

On Wednesday, Iran announced it had successfully tested an upgraded version of its Shihab-3 missile, which is capable of hitting Israel.

Analysts believe the Arrow-2 is still not accurate enough to be reliable against a salvo of Shihab-3s.

Journalist to be deported

Israel plans to deport a British journalist believed to be linked to a pro-Palestinian group.

Eva Jasiewicz, 26, was detained Wednesday upon arrival at Ben-Gurion Airport after authorities determined she was using an assumed name, possibly to mask her association with the International Solidarity Movement, officials said.

On Thursday, the Defense Ministry ordered her deported by the weekend.

An Israeli lawyer hired by Jasiewicz filed a petition against the decision. Israeli officials accuse the organizations of abetting Palestinian terrorist groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.