

## IN THE NEWS

**V.P. candidates agree on Arafat**

Both vice presidential candidates said Yasser Arafat is not a partner for peace.

As Vice President Dick Cheney faced off in Cleveland on Tuesday night against Sen. John Edwards (D-N.C.), one of their few points of agreement was the need for Israel to continue isolating the Palestinian Authority president.

Edwards said Israel has a right to defend itself against rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip.

"They don't have a partner for peace right now," Edwards said.

"They certainly don't have a partner in Arafat, and they need a legitimate partner for peace."

Cheney agreed.

"There has to be an interlocutor you can trust and deal with. And we won't have that, we don't have it now, in a Yasser Arafat," he said.

"There has to be reform of the Palestinian system."

Both men also drove home distinctions between the parties on Israel.

Edwards said a President John Kerry would be tougher on financial support in Saudi Arabia for Palestinian terrorists; Cheney said ousting Saddam Hussein cut off funding for Palestinian suicide bombers.

**Israelis win chemistry Nobel**

Two Israelis and an American will share this year's Nobel Prize for Chemistry.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences recognized Aaron Ciechanover and Avram Hershko of the Technion in Haifa and U.S. chemist Irwin Rose for their breakthrough research into the human immune system in the 1980s.

The \$1.3 million prize, announced Wednesday, will be awarded Dec. 8.

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**Reminder: JTA World Report will not be published Oct. 8.**

# WORLD REPORT

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Ron Kampeas

Left to right, Rep. Robert Wexler (D-Fla.), Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), and Cameron Kerry speak to reporters in Florida this week.

## Presidential campaigns target Florida's Jews with major blitz

By RON KAMPEAS

**T**AMARAC, Fla. (JTA) — A cold fear is blowing through South Florida's strip malls, wilted palms and retirement homes, fear of another agonizingly close election fraught with charges and countercharges of vote theft.

And standing at the nexus of this storm, for reasons having as much to do with geography as with politics, is the region's Jewish community.

Florida's Jewish vote is emerging as crucial to the 2004 presidential contest, and both campaigns are bringing out their top guns to

sway the region's 700,000 Jews, some 4 percent of the state's total population.

"The difference between John Kerry winning by four points or two points or even closer is the turnout here in Broward and Palm Beach counties," Rep. Robert Wexler (D-Fla.) told a packed hall in a retirement community here over the weekend.

Waving his arm at an alignment of the party's Jewish superstars on the stage behind him, Wexler told his constituents: "It shows how much they care about the Jewish community here in south Florida."

Republicans agree: The stakes are high in

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## ■ Campaigns reach out to Florida Jews

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Florida, and the Jewish vote could be key.

"The percentage of Jewish voters is growing, and they vote more often," said Sid Dinerstein, chairman of the Republican Party in Palm Beach county, one of three Jewish-intensive counties targeted by the Democratic blitz this weekend.

Democrats brought in best-selling writer and law professor Alan Dershowitz, erstwhile presidential candidate Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and a host of other Jewish leading lights this weekend.

After the event at the Kings Point retirement campus in Tamarac, the group split up and attended events at synagogues and Jewish community centers throughout the state.

The Republicans haven't been slacking: former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani spoke at a Boca Raton synagogue recently, and one of his predecessors, Ed Koch, was slated to appear this week at events in Boca Raton and Miami, surrounded by Republican Jewish legislators and mayors.

A key to the Republicans' aggressive strategy with Jews in the state is to bring in figures like Giuliani and Koch who don't share much in common with Bush on domestic issues, but who say he is the only candidate capable of defending Israel and handling the threat of terrorism.

Locally, one Republican trophy has been Miami Beach Mayor David Dermer, a Democrat who has endorsed Bush because of his Israel policies.

There are two reasons for the focus on the Jewish community.

First, the Jewish population is more than a 1,000 times the 537 votes that handed Florida and the presidency to George W. Bush in 2000.

In that election, less than 20 percent of Jewish voters nationwide opted for Bush; Republicans are believed to have made inroads since then because of Bush's unprecedented closeness to Israel's government.

Second, out of 67 Florida counties, 15 are planning to use touch-screen voting machines for the first time in a presidential election.

Democrats, who traditionally fare better in recounts than Republicans, oppose the touch-screens because the lack of a paper trail could stymie any recount.

The party is blitzing the 15 counties with appeals to take advantage of Florida's early voting law, which allows voting beginning Oct. 18 at stations that use the old paper ballot machines.

In hopes of ensuring recounts in those counties, Democrats are aiming to persuade 25 percent of voters in those counties to vote early.

Notably, the three largest counties by far of the 15 — Miami-Dade, Palm Beach and Broward — are areas with substantial Jewish communities.

And Jews, campaign officials suggest, are prime targets for the early-voting campaign because they are practiced-enough voters to absorb the complex reasons for voting before Nov. 2.

Leading the early-voting drive for the Democrats is Ron Klein, the Jewish minority leader in the state senate.

The appeal is resonating with many Jewish retirees who have bitter memories of 2000, when confusing ballots led some Jewish voters to cast a vote for Pat Buchanan, the Holocaust-diminishing Reform candidate, instead of Al Gore.

"I'm concerned there could be finagling," said Ruth Kaplan Weiser, after hearing Klein speak at Temple Emeth in Delray Beach.

Beyond such practical considerations, Democrats are concerned that Republicans have succeeded in making inroads in the staunchly Democratic community by highlighting Bush's pro-Israel record.

"There's a fear factor," state Sen. Skip Campbell told the Jewish audience in Tamarac.

"They're coming here saying, 'We love Israel and John Kerry doesn't love Israel.'" He noted Kerry's 100 percent voting record in the Senate.

Early on, the Kerry campaign had calcu-

lated that Kerry would only have to prove traditional pro-Israel bona fides — a strong congressional voting record, tales of his many visits to the country — and avoid a one-upmanship battle on who was better for Israel.

Instead, the hope was that Jews would be

more focused on domestic issues such as the economy and the make-up of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Polling suggests that such a strategy was not off the mark — Bush has gained only a few points in recent national Jewish polls — but in a close election, even a handful of votes could make the difference.

So the Kerry campaign is now hammering home Kerry's Israel record.

Kerry supporters attending the events said it was just in time.

Gloria Green came to the event in Delray Beach, which featured Dershowitz, to get talking points to defend Kerry's Israel record.

"I have a friend who is voting for Bush because he thinks Bush is so good for Israel," she said.

In a conference call of Jewish house parties on Sunday night, Lieberman said Sunday's get-out-the-vote effort heartened him.

"This day could be the largest mobilization of Jewish people since the Six-Day War, and I'm hoping to see a similar result," he said. "It's an opportunity to get right what didn't turn out right in 2000."

Dershowitz said Bush had emphasized Iraq to the detriment of Iran, allowing a potential nuclear threat to Israel to fester.

The fears of Republican inroads into the Jewish community that drive such rhetoric are justified, said Dinerstein, the Palm Beach Republican Party chairman.

He predicted that as many as 40 percent of Jewish voters in Florida would vote for Bush this election.

**Jews, who make up 4 percent of Florida's population, are emerging as crucial in the presidential race.**

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# Politicos navigate new election laws

By MATTHEW E. BERGER

WASHINGTON (JTA) — It's hard to get your candidate into office. But this election cycle, it's even harder to play by the rules.

New campaign finance laws have made it more difficult for Jewish donors, political activists and consultants to aid their favorite candidates and causes at the same time. As is also the case among other political players, Jews are forced to choose between backing a candidate or a political organization, or advising one group over another.

This has forced some to cut ties with their traditional allies, pitted partner versus partner at some political consulting companies, and even forced senior officials to opt out of attending their own organization's events.

For example, the Jewish liaison for the Kerry campaign and the executive director of the National Jewish Democratic Council are not speaking to each other, to avoid the appearance of collusion, since both are working on separate projects to court Jewish voters. "We exchange niceties, but that's about it," Jay Footlik, the Kerry campaign's senior adviser for Jewish and Middle East affairs, said of his relationship with Ira Forman.

The new campaign finance laws, which were enacted in 2002, banned so-called soft money, or unlimited contributions to political parties, which used to run a lot of election ads for their candidates.

The new laws resulted in the proliferation — and increased importance — of advocacy groups, known as 527s because of their Internal Revenue Service designation.

Election law states that national political candidates and parties cannot coordinate activities with these advocacy groups, which due to the new rules have, in this election, taken on a greater role in promoting their candidates.

Several Jewish political organizations have created 527 groups to run political advertisements and outreach efforts and, therefore, have to refrain from communicating with some of their strongest allies and frequent collaborators.

This has led to redundant actions and frequent confusion among advocacy groups and consulting firms that work with 527s.

But, Jewish politicians say, caution has to rule the day.

The two partners of Rabinowitz-Dorf Communications are working different segments of the Jewish Democratic outreach game. Steve Rabinowitz, the company's president, is advising the NJDC. His managing partner, Matt Dorf, is helping the Kerry campaign place ads in Jewish newspapers.

So while the colleagues still go for walks together and shared Yom Kippur break fast at Rabinowitz's home, they have erected a figurative firewall in the office and keep their insider knowledge secret.

"It's not like we don't talk about the campaign," Rabinowitz said. "It's just we go to great lengths not to talk of what NJDC is doing or what he knows the Kerry campaign is doing."

Dorf said doors rarely were closed in the office here before the political season, but now it's a daily occurrence.

"It certainly makes for awkward moments," he said.

Both NJDC and the Kerry campaign placed ads in Jewish newspapers around the High Holidays. Dorf and Rabinowitz say they were upset to see they had both placed ads in the same issues of the same papers, thus not spreading their resources.

But, they said, it helps prove they aren't working together.

To help show he isn't working with the Republican Party, Matt Brooks, the executive director of the Republican Jewish Coalition, skipped the GOP national convention in August, even though his group held several high-profile events, including one with Vice President Dick Cheney.

Brooks said that after consulting with campaign law experts, his group concluded that the national convention would be a place where interaction with party decision makers would be virtually inevitable, and those conversations could, theoretically, impact the RJC's attempts to bring Jewish votes for the Bush/Cheney ticket.

"We considered it in our best interest to avoid being even in that situation," Brooks said.

At the same time, one of RJC's board members, Fred Zeidman, resigned from the

group, so that he could work more actively on Bush's campaign. Zeidman was appointed by Bush as chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, which oversees the Holocaust museum in Washington.

"We want to be so clear on this, to withstand the most extensive scrutiny," Brooks said. "It doesn't cost us that much more to have the gold standard of compliance."

Jewish leaders in both parties say they have gone to great lengths, and expense, to remain kosher.

Forman, NJDC's executive director, said his office tries to avoid talking directly with the Kerry campaign and the Democratic National Committee, and certainly doesn't

tell them what the NJDC is doing.

That means even members of his own board — like Ann Lewis, who is chairing the Women's Vote Center at the DNC, and Mark Mellman, Kerry's pollster — are off-limits.

"I can't use them for political advice anymore," Forman said. "That's frustrating, but understandable."

Many involved in the game say the deliberate moves they are making are more to keep up appearances than to prevent accidental collusion.

"I understand why it is, and I think if there are going to be independent groups and independent expenditures, they have to be truly independent," Rabinowitz said.

"But it seems ridiculous, and to the outside observer it seems completely unbelievable."

In fact, he said he fears or even expects to be investigated within the next few months because of his company's political work. But at the same time, he says, he will not be stopped from doing his job or supporting his candidates.

"We don't want to be locked out of doing everything we can for the campaign," he said.

So, until Nov. 2, more doors will be closed, and more voices hushed around Washington.

"It's a very inside Washington Beltway thing," Dorf said. "You go with where the law is. This cycle, this is where the law is and some people are doing some really strange dances."

Jewish political players had to choose between supporting candidates and political groups.

AMERICA  
DECIDES  
2004

## ■ JTA Op-Ed Special Section ■

# Kerry offers hope for an Israel in need

By DAHLIA SCHEINDLIN



TEL AVIV (JTA) — Many American Jews and Israeli Americans seem impressed by George W. Bush's putative support for Israel. As an Israeli, I implore responsible Jewish voters who care about Israel: Look at his record over his rhetoric, and you'll see the dangers of his leadership for this country.

Luckily, John Kerry's record offers hope for Israel.

I made aliyah from New York and have lived in Israel for nine years, through two intifadas and at least two Iraq scares, masks and all. But I have never been more frightened for Israel's safety, than under George W. Bush. I have never despaired more of advancing peace, as during George W. Bush's term.

It is difficult to recall a president who was less engaged in solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Whether we liked or disliked Bush Sr. and his secretary of state, James Baker's disciplinarian approach, they were involved. Whether one agrees or disagrees with him, President Clinton was passionately committed.

During the worst four years in Israel's history, George W. Bush has done a resounding nothing.

In his first National Security Council meeting, he decided to disengage from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and his disinterest shows: The road map was presented and then forgotten. Bush opposed Israel's security fence throughout 2003, threatening Israel's loan guarantees, and then suddenly supported it — coincidentally at the start of the election year.

The same goes for unilateral separation. Prior to 2004, Bush refused to call Arafat a terrorist and insisted he remain the negotiating partner; a former political officer at the Israeli Embassy in Washington noted ruefully that Bush is the reason Arafat is still around.

Some hailed the president's "promises" to Ariel Sharon in April as a victory — yet Bush all but reneged, including regarding the Palestinian right of return, two weeks later. Just last week at the U.N. General Assembly, Bush called for a settlement

freeze. Which is the real Bush policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

With the second intifada, many here felt that only strong American involvement would help reach a negotiated end to the misery. As president, George W. Bush hasn't even visited Israel. His policy is an irrelevant mess of contradictions that leaves Israel in despair.

But Bush's actions in Iraq leave the country in danger. Suicide bombings and now beheadings are tearing Iraq and other countries apart — a horror we hoped no one else would ever know. Iraq is out of control, bin Laden is free and Al-Qaida is growing. That makes Israel, and being Israeli, more dangerous.

His lack of action in Iran is beyond dangerous — it is outrageous. America has known about secret nuclear facilities for more than two years, and now everyone knows about Iran's capacity to produce nuclear weapons. But Iraq has cost vital American credibility in Europe and the Arab world, and America is far weaker in facing the escalating threat. Iran is a hornet's nest of hatred, by some accounts it is the new Afghanistan, putting Israel directly in the line of fire.

Isolation and resentment of America spill over onto Israel. Conspiracy theories affect business, social and cultural relations. When Mikos Theodorakis, the legendary Greek composer, railed on the Israeli-American control over the world, he sounded only partly anti-Semitic. In part, he was just expressing beliefs that are tragically prevalent in once-benign neighboring countries.

A generation of moderate Muslims is turning radical, learning to hate America — and with it, Israel — because of the mangled Iraq war effort. Who is the closer target for their rage, America or Israel? Al-Qaida is threatening Israelis around the world, and the Mombasa incident, the terrorist attack at a Kenya hotel frequented by Israelis, shows its capabilities.

In Israel, the world's resentment, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and Islamic

extremism are bad enough. Under Bush, these problems have gotten worse and he shows little commitment to addressing them. I'm not even sure he understands them.

John Kerry understands. He has supported Israel in every vote for 20 years; that's way before the electoral campaign started. Kerry understood how to fight terrorism long before Bush was ignoring intelligence reports on imminent attacks in the United States.

While Bush Sr. was selling missiles to Saudi Arabia (how is that good for Israel?), Kerry was one of the first to write a Senate report investigating Saudi busi-

nesses for funding terrorist organizations. Bush Sr. met members of the Bin Laden family, and the figures incriminated in Kerry's 1992 report helped fund George W.'s electoral campaign.

Kerry has a 12-year, highly analytic approach targeted at the sources of

terrorism. Bush has a four-year record of being passive on intelligence, coddling Saudis, making the wrong connection between Iraq, weapons of mass destruction and 9/11, and talking tough while Iran and North Korea fester.

Despite his rhetoric, the administration has cut State Department counterterrorism programs by an average of 20 percent every year since 9/11. Kerry is unburdened by the Republicans' chronic dual loyalty to Arab oil barons alongside America's security, which led them to defeat a bill banning oil companies from doing business with terrorist states — this past June.

When the election dust settles, Bush will no longer need to buy Jewish votes — so there is no guarantee that actions he eventually does take would favor Israel. And after four years of Bush's leadership, Israel is a more dangerous place, a more hated place and a more hopeless place.

How can we reject a candidate who understands, with unwavering support, what Israel needs?

*Dahlia Scheindlin is an international political consultant and public opinion*

**Kerry, unlike Bush, wouldn't flip-flop on Israel's security issues.**

## ■ JTA Op-Ed Special Section ■

# Bush's terror fight garners support in Israel

By KORY BARDASH



JERUSALEM (JTA) — Two weeks ago, a 77-year-old American woman living in Haifa called me and asked how she could register to vote in the American elections. “I have never voted for a Republican before,” she told me. “I’ve even worked in Democratic presidential campaigns. But this time I am voting for President Bush.”

When I asked her why, she summed it all up in three words: “Bush has backbone.”

It is a sentiment I have heard often in discussing the upcoming elections with hundreds of Americans living in Israel. If what I have heard is indicative of the opinions of the 120,000 eligible voters here, President George W. Bush will win their support by a wide margin.

That would mark a sea change from four years ago. Because of Jews’ long-standing affinity for the Democrats and the ill-will Bush’s father justly earned for his frosty attitude toward Israel, Bush fared poorly among American voters in Israel in 2000.

But while I have encountered few people here who voted for Bush in 2000, I have met few who do not plan to vote for him in 2004.

What accounts for this difference? The No. 1 reason, as the Haifa woman so succinctly put it, appears to be Bush’s resolve in fighting the war on terror. While voters living in the United States are focused on a range of issues, their countrymen living in Israel are focused almost exclusively on the issue of terrorism.

Israelis are on the front lines in the war on terror, and the Americans who live among them are no exception. Here, the war on terror is not some distant fight experienced through a living-room television. It is right on our doorstep. It accompanies us as we walk our children to school, board a bus, eat in a pizza shop or sit in a cafe.

Americans living in Israel have learned the hard way that the only way to defeat terror is to fight it. We have seen how the Israeli government’s decision two years ago to initiate Operation Defensive Shield and thereby dramatically increase its military response to terror has drastically reduced the number

of casualties from terror attacks.

That is why President Bush’s post-9/11 decision to wage an all-out offensive against global terror is one that we know has made America and the entire free world safer. Perhaps Americans living on the front lines are more appreciative than others of the security afforded by the president’s resolve.

In contrast, there is widespread concern here that Sen. John Kerry will not forcefully confront terrorism. He has given ample reason for doubt, from a Senate record replete with votes against military spending to foreign policies that seem incoherent to promises that he would wage a more “sensitive” war on terror.

While concerns about Kerry’s resolve might be expected from Republicans, I am surprised by how many Democrats have the same doubts. Time after time, I have heard Democrats lament how Kerry is not cut from the same cloth as the “Democrats of old” who helped lead the struggle against fascism and communism.

The position of the two candidates on specific matters related to Israel also plays an important role in determining the vote of Americans who live here. Bush’s refusal to pressure Israel into making concessions to terror when many short-sighted democratic leaders around the world were calling for just that, has earned him a deserved reputation as the strongest friend Israel has ever had in the White House.

Moreover, his decision in 2001 not to send U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell to the U.N.-sponsored conference against racism in Durban, South Africa, as a protest against the anti-Semitic circus that took place there, has also won him the support of many who appreciate the president’s moral clarity.

In contrast, Kerry is seen as constantly changing his positions on even the most important issues. An example was his recent flip-flop on the defensive barrier Israel is erecting to protect its civilians

from suicide bombers. At first, Kerry opposed the fence that has proven so effective at saving lives, calling it a “barrier to peace.” Later, when he realized that the 1,000 Israeli victims of terrorism made his position politically untenable, he reversed course.

Not surprisingly, Americans in Israel do not have a great deal of confidence that as president, Kerry would support Israel in the face of European, Arab and U.N. pressure. Having made winning the support of these parties a central theme in his campaign, many here are concerned that Israel will pay the price for Kerry’s hopes of being “respected abroad.”

For example, how would Kerry respond to the recent French foreign minister’s call that Yasser Arafat, an unrepentant terrorist who President Bush has refused to meet, be included in peace negotiations?

When Kerry calls for more U.N. involvement in the war on terror, Americans in Israel see it as a strategy of appeasement. Will an institution that allows Libya to chair a human rights commission and Syria to sit on the Security Council help the United States defend democracy and confront terror?

Likewise, when Americans in Israel hear Kerry claim that European leaders would rather have him as president, they are no less concerned. After all, this is the same Europe that has counseled appeasement time and again and which has done so little to combat a rising tide of global anti-Semitism. Will a President Kerry rely on the resolve and supposed moral clarity of European leaders to confront an evil that threatens our entire world?

According to the polls, Bush and Kerry are still running neck and neck. But judging from what I have seen and heard over the last few months, Bush will win the votes of Americans in Israel by a landslide. I suppose backbone counts for a little more when you are on the front lines.

*Kory Bardash is the chairman of the Israeli branch of Republicans Abroad*

**Bush has earned his reputation as the strongest friend Israel has ever had in the White House.**

# Decision to ban Barak sparks demonstration

By BRAM EISENTHAL

MONTREAL (JTA) — Concordia University's decision last week to reject Hillel's request to host former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak on campus opened a floodgate of protest.

At a peaceful demonstration outside Concordia's downtown campus on Tuesday, speaker after speaker condemned the university for denying the principle of free speech.

The controversy comes two years after the university was the scene of a violent anti-Israel riot, when another former Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, was due to speak there.

After that speech was canceled in the wake of the violence, Concordia became the target of international controversy, criticized for allowing pro-Palestinian students to dictate who can and who cannot speak there publicly.

This week, some 200 students, including some from McGill University and some Palestinian supporters, attended the rally along with community activists.

Rabbi Reuben Poupko, a well-known community activist and spiritual leader of Beth Israel Beth Aaron Congregation, attended the rally in support of the students.

"Through its actions, this university has made a clear admission that it cannot guarantee a safe environment for a distinguished speaker like Ehud Barak," Rabbi Poupko told JTA prior to the rally.

"They have also told us that any anti-Israel speakers are allowed to come here, but that pro-Israel speakers would cause a riot and are therefore denied access."

Concordia has some 800 Jewish students out of a population of 30,000.

Concordia denied the Hillel request at a committee meeting that included university officials and campus security.

A statement by the director of security, Jean Brisebois, said that the security of members of the Concordia community could not be guaranteed.

At a hastily called news conference Monday afternoon, the vice rector of services, Michael Di Grappa, said the administration had consulted with Yale University, where Barak spoke recently.

"The situation there was different," Di Grappa said. "The security carried side arms, firearms and the building was more secure."



Bram Eisenenthal

Students rally Tuesday at Montreal's Concordia University, protesting the school's decision not to let former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak speak on campus.

Concordia's security staff is unarmed.

Di Grappa denied that public opinion had anything to do with the decision.

"It is unfortunate, but a reality, that the safety of its community members and guests must occupy a central position in planning events at an institution dedicated to free speech," Di Grappa said.

It was the principle of free speech that protesters addressed at the mid-day rally.

"Free Speech Unless Concordia Vetoes It," stated one sign held aloft by a student.

The Rev. Darryl Gray, a prominent black community and Christian leader, asked the crowd, "What are we afraid of?"

"This kind of information should never be suppressed" because it "makes us uncomfortable," Gray said.

"What happens next? When someone doesn't agree with the next speaker, and the next speaker, and the next speaker? Do we tell them we'll support it, but only if they go down the street, only if they speak someplace else?"

Gray was referring to Concordia's compromise solution that they would sponsor Barak's speech at another venue, off-campus.

Gil Troy, a professor at Montreal's McGill University, spoke while wearing his academic robes.

"These robes are why I became an academic," he said. "I come here as a member of the academic community, not as a professor. And I ask: Where is the leadership

of Concordia? How come the streets here aren't filled with academics, to defend these core values?"

"If we give in to intimidation today, what will become of tomorrow?" Troy asked. "Where is our good government if we can't allow someone to speak? We need more speech, not less speech. We need more freedom, not less freedom. Let's work on this together."

Concordia Hillel's co-president, Jason Portnoy, who sought permission to invite Barak to speak at Concordia was applauded when he took the microphone.

"There's one word that has to rule the day," he said. "Freedom, freedom, freedom. Today is just the beginning of our struggle, not the end."

"I'd be standing here today, with equal outrage, no matter who the speaker would be."

The only tension at the rally appeared to be directed toward several Palestinian students gathered together to listen to the speeches.

Shujatt Wasty, 22, said he and three friends were listening when some people she assumed were plain-clothes police asked them to step aside.

"They then asked us what side we were on. It was blatant racial profiling," he said. "I have never been so humiliated in my entire life. And it's pretty ironic, because we were talking about how we would be interested in hearing Barak speak."



## HOLIDAYS

## Sukkahs honor proud Jewish past in Polish city

By CAROLYN SLUTSKY

KRAKOW, Poland (JTA) — Three sukkahs are growing in Krakow this fall.

The sukkahs, built to commemorate the harvest festival, join a host of Jewish symbols that have become commonplace in the city today.

The symbols appear to be a partial answer to the question of how citizens of Poland, non-Jews as well as the Jewish community of no more than 5,000, will address its proud Jewish past — a process that began after the fall of communism in 1989.

The Remuh Synagogue is home to one of the sukkahs.

Built in the 1500s, the synagogue was restored in 1957 and serves the city's small Jewish population, providing Orthodox services and holiday celebrations. The sukkah near the entrance to the synagogue joins the cemetery out back as a symbol of Jewish continuity.

A second sukkah stands in the courtyard outside the Galicia Jewish Museum, a new exhibit devoted to portraying the Jewish past in the historic region of Galicia through contemporary photographs depicting the remnants and relics of Jewish life.

Jaime Ashworth, the director of education at the Galicia Museum, said the museum hoped to "provide a space for people who are interested in the tradition but who don't know what to do with it, for people who have given up on finding Jewish culture in Poland."

Przemyslaw Piekarski, an assistant professor at the city's Jagiellonian University, where he teaches Yiddish, constructed the sukkah from branches that were lying in his yard.

Sitting in the sukkah, Piekarski told JTA, "I had mixed feelings performing the mitzvah of making the sukkah," noting that Jews made up a quarter of the prewar population of Krakow. If that proportion was true today, there would now be approximately 200,000 Jews in this city; the number of Jews registered with the official community currently stands at 140.

## Jews wary as church honors Gibson's 'Passion' inspiration

By RUTH ELLEN GRUBER

ROME (JTA) — Mel Gibson's "muse" is on the path to sainthood.

Pope John Paul II this week beatified Anna Katharina Emmerick, a 19th-century German nun whose mystic visions inspired Gibson's gory depiction of the crucifixion of Jesus in "The Passion."

Sunday's move dismayed some Jewish observers.

The Anti-Defamation League, which publicly criticized "The Passion" as anti-Semitic, expressed "deep distress" and said the beatification could harm Christian-Jewish relations.

"In our letter to Church leaders, sent in early June, we acknowledged that beatification is entirely within the realm of the Church and we understand that Sr. Emmerick has been proposed in recognition of her virtuous life and how she strengthened others in faith despite her own ill-health," said an ADL statement.

"Yet," it added, "it cannot be contested that in addition to the aid she offered many of her co-religionists, hatred and anti-Semitism were fomented in her name."

The beatification was the latest move by the church regarding sainthood in recent years that has alienated some Jews.

In 1998, for example, many Jews reacted angrily when the pope made Edith Stein a saint, saying she had been rounded up and killed during World War II because of her Jewish identity, not because she was a nun.

Emmerick, who lived from 1774 to 1824, was almost illiterate and spent much of her life as an invalid. Her grisly visions of the torturing of Jesus were recorded by the German Romantic poet Clemens Brentano, who published them after her death in a book, "The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

The book, which portrays Jews as cruel Christ-killers, has achieved cult status among Roman Catholic traditionalists who oppose the church reforms implemented by the Second Vatican Council in the mid-1960s.

These reforms included an opening to the Jewish world and a renunciation of the

charge of deicide, that Jews were responsible for Jesus' death.

Gibson used a number of the book's images in his controversial film.

"Amazing images," he told an interviewer earlier this year. "She supplied me with stuff I never would have thought of."

Among them were elements not found in the Gospels, such as Mary mopping up her son's blood after his scourging, and the hooded devil inciting Jews to demand Jesus be crucified, or following him as he carried his cross.

Beatification is the last step before Roman Catholic sainthood. The process for Emmerick was begun in 1973 and approved in July 2003, eight months before "The Passion" came out.

The Vatican said it honored Emmerick for her virtuous life, not her visions, which it said it could not confirm.

A previous attempt to beatify Emmerick was halted in 1926 because of concern that Brentano had infused his account of Emmerick's visions with his own views.

During the beatification ceremony, the pope did not mention the book. He

praised Emmerick's piety and concern for the poor and noted that she bore stigmata, or bleeding wounds in her hands and feet, similar to those of Jesus on the cross.

Still, said Shawn Landres, who co-edited a forthcoming book, "After The Passion Is Gone: American Religious Consequences," on the impact of "The Passion," the move was upsetting.

"The church's decision to beatify Emmerick is especially troubling to those of us in the Jewish community who sought to defend the post-Vatican II Church against its critics, especially in the wake of the 'Passion' controversy." However, he added, "beatifying one relatively minor mystic won't satisfy the traditionalists, whose objections to the post-Vatican II Church are much broader and more serious."

Landres, a research fellow at the University of Judaism's Sigi Ziering Institute in Los Angeles cautioned that Jewish criticism of the beatification should be made with respect for the Roman Catholic Church as a whole.

**A nun's gory visions were not mentioned by the pope.**

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## MIDDLE EAST

### Disengaging from peace?

Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan aims to circumvent stalled peace talks with the Palestinians, a key aide to the Israeli prime minister said.

"The significance of the disengagement plan is the freezing of the peace process," Dov Weisglass told Ha'aretz on Wednesday, referring to unilateral Israeli withdrawals from the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank slated for next year.

"And when you freeze that process, you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, and you prevent a discussion of refugees, borders and Jerusalem."

Weisglass, a veteran lawyer who recently stepped down from his post as Sharon's top representative but still serves as his adviser, said the prime minister decided on disengagement in 2003 when it became clear that Israel could become internationally isolated as a result of its handling of the Palestinians.

### Bull's-eye for the Shin Bet

Israeli forces captured a Palestinian sniper after a 30-month manhunt.

The Fatah terrorist who gunned down six Israeli soldiers and four civilians at the Wadi Haramiyah checkpoint in the West Bank in March 2002 was arrested outside Ramallah over the weekend, security sources said Wednesday.

The daylight attack, during which the sniper picked off his victims one by one with a bolt-action rifle and then slipped away, shocked Israel and raised speculation that the Palestinians had hired a foreign mercenary with extensive battlefield experience.

According to security sources, the Palestinian detainee had confessed to the attack under Shin Bet interrogation.

### Second week of Days of Repentance

Israeli forces killed three Palestinians as a military sweep of the northern Gaza Strip entered its second week.

Two possibly armed men and a youth died Wednesday as a result of Israeli fire on the Jabalya refugee camp, which troops and tanks stormed last week to root out Palestinian rocket crews.

There were milder clashes in the nearby Palestinian town of Beit Hanoun.

Israel has vowed to keep up the operation, dubbed Days of Repentance, for as long as it takes to prevent Hamas and other terrorist groups from firing rockets into its territory.

The mission began after the killing of two toddlers in the southern Israeli town of Sderot by a Hamas rocket on Sukkot eve.

At least 80 Palestinians, most of them combatants, have been killed, as well as three Israelis.

### Droning on in Arizona

Officials in Arizona are using Israeli drones to help patrol the state's border with Mexico.

The drones are being used to catch people trying to immigrate illegally into the United States and to seize illegal drugs, Ha'aretz reported.

### Thai dies in Gaza strike

Palestinian terrorists killed a Thai worker at a Gaza Strip settlement. Three gunmen infiltrated Kfar Darom early Wednesday, taking the Thai hostage.

In the ensuing gunfight with Israeli troops, two terrorist were killed.

The third, holed up in the foreign workers' quarters of Kfar Darom, fatally wounded the Thai before being shot dead himself.

## NORTH AMERICA

### 'Gold Train' wrap-up urged

John Kerry and a leading Republican congresswoman called for a speedy resolution to the Hungarian "Gold Train" case.

Hungarian Jewish Holocaust survivors have a long-standing class-action suit against the government over the World War II-era U.S. capture of the "Gold Train," carrying valuables looted from Hungary's Jews.

The United States was meant to have returned the property to survivors; instead, it mostly disappeared.

"Several thousand elderly Holocaust survivors are seeking restitution. Time is not on their side," the Massachusetts senator and Democratic candidate said in a statement this week.

"Yet the Bush administration is dragging its feet."

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.), chairwoman of the House Middle East subcommittee, also has pressed Bush in recent weeks to resolve the issue.

### Bush extends free trade to produce

President Bush extended the free-trade agreement with Israel to include some agricultural produce.

The proclamation, issued Monday, attempts to resolve differences over the access of some U.S. agricultural produce to Israel, extends through 2008 and will allow some Israeli produce to enter the United States without tariffs. Israel has had a free-trade agreement with the United States since 1985.

### Happy about refugee arrivals

A Jewish group that supports immigrants in the United States is praising an increase in the number of refugees who entered the United States.

But the group said the target for refugees should be raised. Some 52,875 refugees entered between Oct. 1, 2003, and Sept. 30, 2004, in contrast to only 28,000 the year before.

"We appreciate the administration's efforts to revive the U.S. Refugee Program since the dramatic decline that resulted from Sept. 11, 2001," said Leonard Glickman, the president of Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

But Glickman added that he would like to see the target raised from 70,000 to 90,000.

### Minnesota JCRC condemns vandalism

Minnesota's Jewish community condemned attacks on Muslims.

There have been three attacks in recent weeks on Muslims, including an attempted arson this weekend on a mosque in a Minneapolis suburb.

"The Jewish community will continue to stand with our Muslim friends and neighbors in order to help to heal the emotional scars and repair the physical damage caused by these attacks," the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas said in a statement Monday.

## WORLD

### French Jews get newspaper back

A Jewish publication returned to French newsstands.

The first edition of the new-look Tribune Juive, a national Jewish weekly that stopped publishing last year, was published Monday under its new editor, the broadcaster and journalist Ivan Levi.

The publication, which includes a number of senior community leaders on its advisory board, including France's chief rabbi, Joseph Sitruk, has adopted a news magazine format and is to be published on a monthly basis.