

IS requested that all DEA Field Divisions canvas their employees to determine if these activities have occurred in their area. Additionally, information has been received from several other federal law enforcement agencies. The following is a summary, by DEA Division Offices, of the events that have taken place:

### Atlanta Division

1. Sometime in July or August 2000, a woman claiming to be a student from a foreign country attempted to enter the Chattanooga, Tennessee Resident Office. The woman was attempting to sell homemade pins that she hand painted and put together herself. An Office Assistant advised the woman that she was on Federal Property and solicitation was prohibited. The Office Assistant claimed the woman was from the Middle East, but cannot recall the exact location.
2. In mid to late December 2000, a male and female subject described as being in their mid-twenties arrived at the residence of a Special Agent. The male subject spoke fluent English, however the female subject had a heavy accent. Both subjects claimed to be Israeli art students. The Special Agent examined some of the artwork, but became suspicious when the students would not provide him with a contact telephone number in case he should decide to buy something. Subsequently, the Special Agent saw some of the exact same artwork for sale at kiosk in the Mall of Georgia. The Special Agent questioned the salesperson about the origin of the artwork, but the salesperson was uncooperative.
3. During the first week of January 2001, an individual identifying himself as an Israeli art student attempted to bring artwork into the Columbus, Georgia Resident Office. The individual was not permitted to enter the office.
4. The following was received by the Montgomery, Alabama District Office:

On 3/27/2001, at approximately 1:45 p.m., Montgomery District Office Group Supervisor John W. Wall was exiting the elevator on the first floor of our building enroute to a meeting. Our building is a small two-story office building that also contains the offices of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Geological Survey, Dyncorp and a small investment company (Newman Investments). As G/S Wall got out of the elevator, a white female was getting on. G/S Wall noticed she was carrying a large blue artist portfolio. G/S Wall engaged her in conversation and asked if she was in our building on

government business to which the female stated that she was an art student from Austria and was promoting her work. G/S Wall asked if she was actually from Israel and the female later identified as Vanina Erika DARDIC, DOB 3/5/78, stated again that she was from Austria. DARDIC got on the elevator for the second floor and G/S Wall went to his OGV and notified me with instructions to re-interview the female.

5. Several minutes passed and DARDIC never came to our office. (Investigation later revealed that DARDIC did not visit any of the offices in our building) Moments later an administrative assistant observed DARDIC walking through the parking lot in the direction of other buildings.

6. At that point, agents set out on foot to find DARDIC. The agents observed another white female later identified as Ester SAGES, DOB 9/30/77, walking through the office complex, also carrying a large blue portfolio. SAGES was followed on foot a short distance to a van that was parked on a side road where the agents made contact with a white male, identified as Marcelo VALANSI, DOB 11/24/77. VALANSI took SAGES' portfolio and placed it into the van, a 1984 GMC full-size custom van bearing Florida tag T11YZX, registered to Marcelo VALANSI at 901 SE 1st Ave., #2, Gainesville, Florida.

7. The agents approached SAGES and VALANSI, identified themselves and separated the two for interviews. VALANSI stated that he was an art student at the University of Florida and stated that they were traveling around to "promote" the work of new artists. Information revealed that VALANSI was registered at Santa Fe Community College in 1999 and not the University of Florida. VALANSI produced an ID card from Argentina, DNI 26,316,660, card #190961, and stated that he was on spring break from the University of Florida where he has been a student for three years. VALANSI stated his passport was in his hotel room at the Governor's House Hotel, #180. VALANSI stated that he and approximately five other students had been in Montgomery about two days and planned to stay several more.

8. Ester SAGES produced an Israeli passport, #6470399, and stated that she had been in the U.S. approximately 3 weeks (Visa type R, class B1/B2). SAGES claimed to be an artist but does not attend school anywhere. SAGES admitted to having served in the Israeli Army for two years (mandatory service). SAGES identified her father as Elyahu SAGES (deceased) and her mother as Marjalit SAGES. SAGES gave the same story as being in Montgomery to "promote" the artists work.

9. While talking to VALANSI and SAGES, Vanina DARDIC walked up and was interviewed. DARDIC provided an ID card from Argentina (DNI 26, 473, 227, card #J8557), but stated that she had dual citizenship (Argentina and Israel). DARDIC stated that she was born in Argentina to an Argentine father, Mario DARDIC, and an Israeli mother, Judith COHEN (maiden name). She moved to Israel when she was 12 years of age and served in the Israeli Army. DARDIC reported that she is the girlfriend of Marcelo VALANSI. DARDIC spoke English, Hebrew and Spanish. SAGES spoke English and Hebrew. VALANSI spoke English and Spanish.

10. VALANSI was asked if the artwork was for sale, to which he stated "not really" that they were "promoting" their work and that it is important to artists that people like their work. VALANSI was asked if, hypothetically, someone liked his work and wanted to commission him to paint something, how would someone get in contact with him? VALANSI was very hesitant to provide a means of contact. When pressed, VALANSI

provided Gainesville telephone #352-378-1485 as a contact number. He was asked how their group could afford to travel around "promoting" artwork if they derive no income from it. He stated that his parents, Roberto and Graziela VALANSI finance his travels. The parent's address in Buenos Aires is reportedly Salguero 2468 Apartment 15.

11. Ester SAGES stated that one of their stops in Montgomery was going to be the Jewish Federation Office which is located adjacent to where their van was parked (2820 Fairlane Dr., Montgomery, telephone #334-277-5820). All of the subjects were photographed, however SAGES initially did not want her picture taken.

12. EPIC was contacted for information on their entries into the U.S. EPIC queries indicated the following:

VALANSI, Marcelo (Argentina passport #26316660)

- 1). Admission date: 2/01/2001  
Admission Class: F1 (Student)  
Port of Entry: Miami, FL  
Arrival from: Tel Aviv Israel  
Visa Issued: Buenos Aires (8/20/98)  
Carrier: A1 Israel Airlines (flt 201)  
Intended address: 901 S.E. 1st Ave., Gainesville, FL
  
- 2). Admission date: 10/18/00  
Admission to: 1/17/01  
Admission Class: CP (Public Interest Parole)  
Port of Entry: Miami, FL  
Arrival from: unk (most likely Columbia)  
Carrier: Avianca (flt 8)  
Intended address: 901 S.E. 1st Ave., Gainesville, FL  
Departure date: 12/28/00 from Miami
  
- 3). Admission date: 11/12/99  
Admission Class: WT/VW (Visitor w/o Visa)  
Port of Entry: Miami, FL  
Arrival from: Santiago, Chile  
Carrier: La Lan Chile (flt 500)  
Intended address: 901 S.E. 1st Ave., Gainesville, FL  
Departure date: unk
  
- 4). Admission date: 04/15/99  
Port of Entry: Miami, FL  
Arrival from: San Jose (Juan Santamari)  
Carrier: LACSA (flt 620)

- Departure date: unk
- 5). Admission date: 01/11/99  
Admission Class: F1 (Student)  
Port of Entry: Miami, FL  
Arrival from: unk  
Carrier: La Lan Chile (flt 500)  
Intended address: 901 S.E. 1st Ave., Gainesville, FL  
Departure date: unk
- 6). Admission date: 8/23/98  
Admitted to: 12/31/98  
Admission Class: F1 (Student)  
Port of Entry: Miami, FL  
Arrival from: unk  
Carrier: A L Argentina (flt 1324)  
Intended address: 617 E. University Ave., Gainesville, FL  
Departure date: 12/19/98
- 7). Admission date: 05/04/98  
Admitted to: 11/03/98  
Admission Class: B2 (Visitor)  
Port of Entry: Miami, FL  
Arrival from: unk  
Visa issued: Buenos Aires 5/11/90  
Carrier: E U Empresa Ecuatoriana (flt 800)  
Intended address: 617 E. University Ave., Gainesville, FL  
Departure date: 08/10/98
- 8). Admission date: 1/02/97  
Admitted to: 7/01/98  
Admission Class: B2 (Visitor)  
Port of Entry: Miami, FL  
Arrival from: unk  
Visa issued: Buenos Aires 5/11/90  
Carrier: La Lan Chile (flt 502)  
Intended address: 1436 Washington Ave., Miami, FL  
Departure date: 03/13/98

13. SAGES, Ester (Israel passport #6470399)

- 1). Admission date: 3/03/01

Carrier:  
(no further info)

Tower Air (flt 31)

15. Regarding the groups story as art students, specifically VALANSI stating that he is a student at the University of Florida out on spring break, RAC Dick McEnany, Gainesville R.O. inquired as to VALANSI's status as a student. RAC McEnany advised that VALANSI was last registered in the spring of 1999. RAC McEnany also stated that spring break was already over for this year.

16. It is noted that in addition to the three subjects contacted, another group of three alleged art students were documented working another office complex on Perry Hill Road (Interstate Park) in Montgomery on the same day (3/27/2001). This group is known to have solicited several offices in that complex which are Department of Defense contractors (Maxwell Air Force Base is in Montgomery). Montgomery FBI agents made contact with that group at their hotel (La Quinta Inn) and identified them.

17. The local FBI office was contacted and provided with this information for follow-up as necessary. The FBI POC is RAC Sharon Ormsby.

#### Boston Division

18. There have been not reports of suspicious activities by Israeli art students occurring at DEA facilities or at the residences of any DEA Employee under the Boston Division.

#### Caribbean Division

No response.

#### Chicago Division

20. On or around June 26, 2000, a male and female claiming they were Israeli art students, visited the home of a Diversion Investigator. The male was described as Caucasian, 5'8", 160 lbs., dark brown hair, clean-shaven, brown eyes, and early 20's. The female was described as 5'6", 160 lbs., long curly dark brown hair with blonde highlights, early 20's. The students left the residence without incident.

21. On or around June 30, 2000, a second set of Israeli art students arrived at the home of the same Diversion Investigator. These students were confrontational when asked to leave and the police were called (16th District Chicago Police Dept.). The male was described as 5'6", 150 lbs., slim build, dark skin, no facial hair, very dark hair, early 20's. The female was described as 5'8", slim build, brown shoulder length hair, and early 20's. They did approach other homes in the Diversion Investigator's neighborhood. The Israeli students were seen entering a Chevy Astro van, steel gray in color, with darkened windows.