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ELUSIVE HARARI TURNS UP IN ISRAEL AND DENIES HE WAS NORIEGA'S ADVISER

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- Mike Harari, the elusive former Mossad operative said to have been a top adviser to Manuel Noriega, surfaced in Israel over the weekend and declared emphatically that he was only a friend of the deposed Panamanian dictator.

Harari, who reportedly was sought by U.S. forces after they invaded Panama on Dec. 20, appeared Saturday night on Israel Television and denied he had collaborated with Noriega. He insisted he was merely in the import-export business in Panama, dealing with agricultural equipment and solar heaters.

"They said I was Noriega's adviser. I'm not an adviser. Noriega is not a partner of mine," Harari declared.

"I did not supervise Noriega's affairs. I did not supervise or train his forces. I did not organize his personal guard. I am simply a private individual involved in business," Harari said.

"I was never an arms dealer, and there are no Israeli weapons in Panama," he added.

Harari described the Panamanian strongman who surrendered to U.S. forces Jan. 3 as "a very pleasant and intelligent man, but definitely not an associate of mine."

Noriega, a former CIA operative whom a U.S. grand jury indicted last year, was arraigned on drug charges last week in a federal court in Miami.

Harari was linked to Noriega in media accounts that depicted the 62-year-old Israeli as a mystery man who recruited and trained Noriega's personal guard and was his closest adviser and confidant.

Did Not Arrive In A Suitcase

"I was not his adviser. I never heard or saw any evidence of his being involved in drugs, and I was involved only in promoting civilian projects," Harari told Israel Television.

He accused "other countries" of launching a disinformation campaign against him, referring, presumably, to the United States.

A senior U.S. Embassy official reported in Panama two weeks ago that Harari was in American custody. But that was retracted shortly afterward. The commander of the U.S. invasion force, Lt. Gen. Carl Stiner, said last week that Harari had fled the country.

Harari denied a claim by the new head of the Panamanian security forces that he was tipped off by Israeli officials about the impending U.S. invasion and that, in turn, he warned Noriega.

He said he left Panama unaided after the invasion started.

"I did not arrive as a blond or in a suitcase," he quipped.

Harari was appointed by Noriega as Panama's honorary consul in Israel some years ago. He held Panamanian as well as Israeli passports.

According to published reports, Harari directed a Mossad unit that botched an assignment by the late Prime Minister Golda Meir to avenge the massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympics in Munich.

IDF SHOOTS INFILTRATOR DEAD AS ATTACKS FROM JORDAN RISE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- An Israel Defense Force patrol fatally shot an armed intruder wearing a Jordanian army uniform Sunday.

The incident, in the Hamat Gader region of the Golan Heights, was the latest in a series of infiltration attempts and gunfire into Israel from Jordan for which a Syrian-based terrorist group has claimed credit.

The IDF said it was not certain yet whether the infiltrator was a Jordanian soldier or a terrorist disguised as one. He was carrying an M-16 rifle.

But the IDF is convinced that the man did not wander into Israel by mistake, since the border is marked not only by the river but by a protective fence some distance from the river bank.

Shots were fired at an IDF jeep from across the river Friday for the second time in less than a week.

It occurred near the southern end of Lake Tiberias, where the Israeli, Jordanian and Syrian borders converge.

There were no casualties, but tourists were evacuated from the Hamat Gader recreational area and alligator farm.

The Abu Musa gang, a breakaway faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization supported by Syria and led by Col. Saed Musa, announced in Damascus on Sunday that it was responsible for the recent border attacks. It claimed to have killed many Israeli soldiers.

The announcement said Jordanian troops cooperated with the terrorists.

Jordanians Conduct Searches

Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai, head of the IDF's central command, said Sunday that Jordan was taking all possible measures to prevent terrorist activities from its territory.

But the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Gen. Dan Shomron, who accompanied Mordechai on a tour of the area, hinted that Jordanian troops may be less reliable than they had been until now.

Shomron cited the strong showing by Islamic fundamentalists in the recent parliamentary elections in Jordan, which may have changed the attitudes and motivations of Jordanian soldiers.

Nevertheless, Jordanian soldiers were visible from Israel on Sunday, as they conducted careful searches on their side of the river from where the shots had been fired.

Israel has warned Jordan through diplomatic channels to prevent the use of its territory for any form of incursions against Israel. The warnings were issued after several incidents in September and repeated last week.

Shots were fired at an IDF patrol from Jordan on Dec. 31. On Jan. 4, an IDF patrol opened fire on two apparent infiltrators from Jordan, who got away. One of them may have been wounded.

Shomron instructed Israeli troops to be constantly on the alert in the region, but to keep cool heads.

**U.S. IN NO HURRY TO SET DATE
FOR FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- When it comes to the promised meeting between Secretary of State James Baker and the Israeli and Egyptian foreign ministers, the United States seems as a reluctant to set a date as a suitor with second thoughts.

"The meeting is still planned," Richard Boucher, the State Department's deputy spokesman, assured reporters Friday. "When we have a date, we will announce the date."

"The important thing," he said, "is to make progress on the issues."

The last point in Baker's five-point proposal for Israeli-Palestinian talks was that "within two weeks" of acceptance of the plan by Israel and Egypt, the secretary would host a meeting in Washington with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens and his Egyptian counterpart, Esmat Abdel Meguid.

These talks would presumably set the agenda for the Israeli-Palestinian talks to be held in Cairo, as well as agreement on the makeup of the Palestinian delegation.

Egypt accepted the five points Dec. 6, a month after Israel's Inner Cabinet agreed to it.

But the State Department said at the time that the Washington meeting could not be held within two weeks, because Baker was going to Europe and because of the holidays. The department said it would be held early in the new year.

The assumption was this meant January. But Boucher told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency last week, "We never said it would be in January."

Yet at the State Department briefing Friday, he refused to confirm that the meeting would not take place until February.

No Discussion Of Assurances

Boucher also would not discuss any of the issues on which the United States is seeking to make progress.

Israel's acceptance of the five points included a request for several assurances. One was that the Israeli-Palestinians talks would deal only with setting up the elections Israel has proposed for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Others were that the Palestine Liberation Organization would not participate in the negotiations and that Palestinians in East Jerusalem could not vote in the elections.

Baker's proposal includes a statement that "the United States understands that Israel will attend the dialogue only after a satisfactory list of Palestinians has been worked out."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has promised that once Palestinian autonomy in the territories is in place and has been tested, negotiations will begin on the final status of the territories.

But Egypt and the Palestinians are demanding that the final status also be discussed during the Cairo meeting. The Baker proposal is not clear on this. It states that the "Palestinians would be free to raise issues that relate to their opinions on how to make elections and the negotiating process succeed."

When Shamir visited Washington last fall, he reported that he did not receive any of the requested assurances during his meetings with Baker and President Bush. Neither did Israeli Cabinet Secretary Elyakim Rubinstein when he came to Washington in December.

**ISRAEL ISSUES NEW TRAVEL BANS
TO PREVENT CONTACTS WITH PLO**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- The government has imposed another ban on Faisal Husseini, a prominent Palestinian activist and intellectual who advocates civil disobedience against Israel in the administered territories.

The Interior Ministry on Friday issued an administrative order preventing Husseini from traveling abroad for three months.

It was promptly protested by Haim Ramon, chairman of the Labor Party's Knesset faction.

According to Interior Minister Arye Deri, the latest restriction on Husseini's movements is aimed at keeping him from attending a Palestine Liberation Organization meeting in Cairo.

Husseini heads the Institute for Arab Studies in East Jerusalem. He was forbidden to enter the West Bank or Gaza Strip for six months by an order issued Dec. 6, which drew a sharp expression of disapproval from the U.S. State Department at the time.

Another Palestinian leader from East Jerusalem, Dr. Sari Nusseibeh, was turned back at the Allenby Bridge when he tried to cross the border into Jordan.

Bans also were issued against the heads of Arab trade unions in East Jerusalem and Nablus.

A senior government source said the restrictions were intended to signal Washington that residents of East Jerusalem will not be partners to any political dialogue with the Palestinians.

East Jerusalem was annexed in 1967 and is considered an integral part of Israel.

The government insists that Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's plan for Palestinian elections in the administered territories excludes Palestinians from East Jerusalem.

Husseini and other leading Palestinians were once allowed to travel abroad and even to meet with PLO officials. The more liberal policy was interpreted as an attempt to encourage a local leadership alternative to the PLO.

It was ended when the local leaders made clear they considered the PLO to be their only legitimate representative.

Meanwhile, violence perpetrated by intifada activists against fellow Arabs continued in the territories over the weekend.

A bus carrying Arab workers from the West Bank to jobs in Israel was set on fire by masked youths Sunday. No one was hurt, but an estimated \$150,000 damage was done.

MORE LETTER BOMBS ARRIVE IN ISRAEL

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- Letter bombs apparently are pouring into Israel from a number of countries, in a variety of forms.

Accordingly, the authorities are no longer warning the public to be on the lookout for a specific type of mail from a single point of origin, but to treat any letter or parcel from overseas with suspicion.

Ten pieces of booby-trapped mail were detected at the Tel Aviv Central Post Office on Dec. 31. All were postmarked in Cyprus and resembled season's greetings cards.

An 11th letter bomb was intercepted Jan. 2, mailed from Greece. Since then, more have arrived, but the police will not say how many, where from or in what form.

AS SOVIETS ARRIVE BY THE HUNDREDS, ISRAEL WONDERS HOW TO PAY FOR THEM

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- Hundreds of Soviet immigrants landing nightly at Ben-Gurion Airport have given new urgency in government and Jewish Agency circles to the problem of how to pay for their absorption.

The influx since the United States tightened its immigration policies for Soviet Jews in October has clearly exceeded all previous estimates by wide margins.

Initially, Israel expected some 40,000 immigrants this year. Now the estimate is 100,000 or more, and at least a quarter million are expected during the next three years.

The cost of providing them with jobs, shelter and other necessities until they are integrated into Israeli society has been put in the billions of shekels, an amount Israel's severely constrained budget cannot stretch to accommodate.

Since 1973, the United States has been providing the Jewish Agency for Israel, through the United Jewish Appeal, with an annual stipend to aid the absorption of immigrants. The grant now totals \$25 million.

On Sunday, the chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, Simcha Dinitz, requested an increase in that amount, in order to accommodate the Soviet Jewish newcomers.

Dinitz made the request at a meeting with U.S. State Department official Evan Slim, who was accompanied by the American ambassador to Israel, William Brown.

But vastly larger sums will be required.

The most controversial proposal to date is a national, so-called "voluntary loan" of the kind the government has imposed during past emergencies, such as the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

It is favored by Finance Minister Shimon Peres and is being pressed vigorously by his close associate, Deputy Finance Minister Yossi Beilin.

'An Emergency Situation'

But the idea is resisted by those who fear a national loan would inflame already simmering resentment toward Soviet aliyah in some sectors of established Israeli society that feel neglected.

Beilin says there is no choice. "Unfortunately, we have no other sources to finance aliyah," he asserted.

"Just like the people in Israel helped to absorb hundreds of thousands of immigrants in the early '50s, so will they have to lend a shoulder now," he said.

Uri Gordon, head of the Jewish Agency's Immigration and Absorption Department, also supports the loan idea.

In a letter to Peres, he stated that the loan "would strengthen our own stand vis-a-vis world Jewry, some of whom still do not understand the importance of the hour.

In an interview Sunday with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Gordon said earlier absorption plans have been made obsolete by the unprecedented number of arrivals.

"What we originally planned to do over a period of five years, we shall have to do in three years, and what we hoped to do in three years, we must do in a year," Gordon said.

"This is an emergency situation," he said, because the government does not at this time have the tools to cope with absorption on so large a scale.

Gordon suggested the establishment of a "central unified national authority" with a mandate to facilitate immigrant absorption in all its aspects and with the resources to accomplish it.

During the Cabinet meeting Sunday, Minister of Economics and Planning Yitzhak Moda'i stated flatly that the government is not prepared to cope with the present wave of aliyah.

He charged that preparations were continuing as if nothing had changed. "This is an opportunity for a new kind of Zionism, for the consolidation of the State of Israel," Moda'i said.

He proposed that the Ministry of Construction and Housing, headed by his Likud colleague David Levy, immediately begin constructing homes for the newcomers.

He also suggested that the government conduct surveys to match new Soviet immigrants with jobs that suit their aptitudes.

"If we continue with the same process, we shall not have a successful absorption, and that would put an end to the flow of this great potential," Moda'i warned.

(JTA staff writer Cathrine Gerson in Jerusalem contributed to this report.)

FOUR CHRISTIAN FAMILIES FROM USSR ABSORBED IN ISRAEL LIKE JEWISH OLIM

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- Four Christian families from the Soviet Union were welcomed as immigrants in Israel and given the assistance and benefits that Jewish immigrants are entitled to, a Haifa local newspaper reported Friday.

The report was confirmed by the Interior Ministry, which called the incident a mistake and indicated the Soviets eventually will have to leave.

The Jewish Agency showed no surprise at the news and said that such things have happened before.

The newspaper quoted 63-year-old Pyotr Tropimov, a member of the first of the families to arrive here.

"We are a family of 19, and we asked for an emigration visa to Israel because the Soviet authorities would not give us one for the United States," he explained.

"A friend in Beersheba sent us an invitation to come to Israel, and that's how we received the visa," he said.

"We thought that we would be thrown out, but we were nicely received," Tropimov added.

According to the article, the family members were surprised by the warm welcome they got at Ben-Gurion Airport, the apartments allocated to them in Haifa and the financial support.

On that basis, they wrote to relatives in the Soviet Union, who soon joined them.

Tropimov said the families are Catholic and do not intend to convert to Judaism.

Interior Ministry spokeswoman Dvora Ellison said the ministry was surprised to learn of the incident. She said "the immigration status will be negated from anyone who is not entitled to it."

Under the Law of Return, citizenship on arrival is reserved exclusively for Jews, who are defined as someone born of a Jewish mother or converted.

According to the Interior Ministry spokeswoman, the four Soviet families will get tourist visas and temporary work permits, but "after a period of time, they will have to find themselves another corner in the world."

AJCOMMITTEE VISIT TO WASHINGTON FINDS SHIFT IN SUNUNU'S POSITION

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- White House Chief of Staff John Sununu seems to have changed his mind, since coming to Washington a year ago, about the value of repealing the 1975 U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism.

As governor of New Hampshire, Sununu was the only one of the 50 U.S. governors who refused to sign a petition calling for the resolution's repeal.

But last Thursday, Sununu, who is of Lebanese descent, told a visiting delegation of six American Jewish Committee leaders that repeal of the resolution is important and high on the agenda of Thomas Pickering, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

One of the six AJCommittee members called it ironic that a delegation of American Jews was now commending Sununu for his stance on the Zionism-racism resolution.

During its visit here, the AJCommittee delegation also met with Vice President Dan Quayle, who was "strong in committing himself to leading that fight," said Ira Silverman, executive vice president of the AJCommittee.

It was Quayle who in December told a Yeshiva University audience in New York that the administration would push for the resolution's repeal.

The AJCommittee group also met with Richard Schifter, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, and Richard Clarke, assistant secretary of state for politico-military affairs.

Silverman said one impression he had from the meetings was that Israel may have an uphill fight winning the next \$3 billion annual aid package from the United States, and it may not be able to secure a requested \$400 million in loan guarantees to build housing for Soviet Jews and other immigrants.

"It isn't clear that the aid picture can move so easily or quickly," Silverman said.

Meeting With Japanese Envoy

On Soviet Jewry, the delegation presented the U.S. officials with a document alleging continued anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. Silverman said that Sununu "was quite interested" in the issue.

For his part, Schifter gave the group a sneak preview of the State Department's annual human rights report, to be issued in late January.

"There were no surprises," said Silverman. "It's the same set of criticisms regarding the treatment of the intifada" that was made last year.

While in Washington, the delegation also met with Ryohei Murata, Japan's ambassador to the United States. Murata told the group that the U.S. branch of Honda "is now going to be trading actively with Israel," with Japan directly sending spare parts for various vehicles.

He also cited figures showing recent jumps in Japan's trade with Israel, despite the fact that Japanese countries still widely participate in the Arab boycott against Israel.

The delegation raised the Japanese government's failure to enact restrictions preventing its companies from complying with the Arab boycott.

Murata "was very sympathetic to our viewpoint," Silverman added.

CHRISTIE'S OF LONDON AGREES NOT TO SELL CZECH JEWISH ART

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Jan. 7 (JTA) -- Christie's, the prestigious London auction house, has agreed to suspend plans to sell items from the collection of the Czech State Jewish Museum in Prague.

The proposed sale of Judaica, from the collection known to Americans as "A Precious Legacy," was staved off through intervention by the World Jewish Congress.

The managing director of Christie's, David Allison, wrote that Christie's, as signator to a voluntary Code of Practice of British Auctioneers and Antiques Trade Associations, would not "offer for sale items which have left their country of origin other than in accordance with the law of that country."

The case is one of heirless Jewish property, said Elan Steinberg, WJC executive director.

The Jewish artifacts, used regularly by the Jews who lived in Czechoslovakia for a thousand years, were confiscated by the Nazis and placed in storage for what they had intended would be a museum "on the extinct Jewish race."

Part of the collection toured the United States in 1984 and 1985, including stops at the Jewish Museum in New York and at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington.

None of the proposed items for auction were part of the displays of the Czech State Jewish Museum or other museums, but were in storage, said Allison of Christie's. Allison wrote that it is common for museums worldwide to offer for sale items that are not on display or are "surplus."

Selling Heritage For Currency

In Czechoslovakia's case, "the museums are very short of funds, both for new acquisitions and for such basic equipment as humidifiers, and the possibility of raising funds by the sale of unwanted items was naturally attractive," he wrote.

In September, Christie's was invited by Art Centrum, the Czech government agency then responsible for museums, to send representatives to visit six national museums, including the Jewish State Museum.

They were to consider making lists of items from the various collections for a public auction that would be held next fall.

The plan to sell off items of the state museums of Czechoslovakia came to light in November, after it was reported in the weekly cultural publication of the Czech Communist Party. The announcement raised concern that the country would voluntarily sell its own heritage in exchange for badly needed hard currency.

WJC leaders who visited Prague in November discussed the matter with government officials, said Steinberg. Within two weeks of their visit, Czechoslovakia's Communist government had fallen.

The change in government climate "certainly had an effect," Steinberg said.

Both Steinberg and Mark Talisman, Washington representative of the Council of Jewish Federations, who negotiated the U.S. tour of "A Precious Legacy," reported that the Czech Jewish community now has greater representation on the board of the State Jewish Museum.

Talisman, who met with a curator of another Czech museum last month, said that the Jewish community will share responsibility equally with the museum's board.