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**MUBARAK'S STRONG MOSCOW STATEMENTS  
SEEMS TO DISTANCE HIMSELF FROM ISRAEL**  
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 17 (JTA) -- Egypt, which broke ranks with the Arab world a dozen years ago to make peace with Israel and sign the Camp David accords, is rapidly distancing itself from its Israeli ties.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak returned to Cairo from Moscow after a series of meetings with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The meetings ended with a joint statement, in which the two presidents called for peace in the region "on the basis of the U.N. resolutions pertaining to the Middle East."

The mutual announcement is not particularly favorable to Israel.

The new Egyptian-Soviet understanding seems to have nudged the peace process closer to Israel's political nightmare -- an international conference under the aegis of the U.N. Security Council that would include the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Observers here say Moscow has shown that those who eulogized its withdrawal from the Mideast scene were premature. Moreover, the road now seems open as never before to a Soviet-American understanding on the Middle East.

Pundits here say it was no mere coincidence that the Egyptian-Soviet communique was issued shortly before U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived in Moscow for talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

It was seen by some here as an invitation to Baker to join a Moscow-Cairo axis to monitor Israel.

Baker met with Mubarak on Wednesday. According to Ma'ariv, he told the Egyptian president that the United States is concerned by reports that the planned Arab summit meeting in Baghdad might adopt "militaristic formulas" against Israel.

Baker said that could undermine the peace process, according to Ma'ariv, and he asked Mubarak to exert his influence for peaceful solutions.

Israel was concerned earlier this month over Mubarak's efforts to heal the rift between Iraq's President Saddam Hussein and President Hafez Assad of Syria, both relentless foes of Israel.

While Mubarak did not succeed, he managed a rapprochement with Assad, who had denounced Egypt over the years for signing a peace treaty with Israel.

**SHAMIR GRANTED 21-DAY EXTENSION  
TO FORM LIKUD-LED GOVERNMENT**  
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 17 (JTA) -- Prime Minister-designate Yitzhak Shamir requested and promptly received Thursday a 21-day extension of his mandate to form a Likud-led government.

The mandate he received from President Chaim Herzog on April 27 expires Friday.

Negotiations with likely coalition partners seem to be going well and have reached the stage where Cabinet portfolios are being assigned.

But while Likud sources said Shamir already

commands sufficient Knesset votes to set up a narrow coalition with the religious and right-wing parties, he does not appear in a hurry.

He told reporters at the presidential residence that he hoped to have his government in place before the next three-week deadline expires. He refused to say categorically that he would present it to the Knesset next week, as many Likud supporters insist he could.

That has given rise to reports that Shamir favors a unity coalition with the Labor Party and still hopes to form one.

A convivial meeting Wednesday night in Jerusalem with Labor Party leader Shimon Peres, which took place at the wedding of the granddaughter of former Sephardic Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef triggered a new flurry of speculation that a unity government was in the cards.

But Shamir told reporters "it is not practical at this time."

Political observers say Shamir would consider an alliance with Labor only if former Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin replaced Peres as Labor Party head.

Rabin has publicly challenged the incumbent chairman. But a showdown between them expected at the Labor Party's Central Committee meeting this weekend is not likely to materialize.

The committee had been scheduled Thursday to get the report of a commission set up to find out why Labor made a poor showing against Likud in the 1988 Knesset elections. But the panel asked for a postponement Wednesday, saying it was not ready to present its findings. It is now due to be released May 27.

According to leaks from the panel, blame was heaped on Peres and his aides who controlled the campaign machinery.

Rabin was expected to cite the report as one reason why Peres should be replaced.

Peres' aides are reportedly pressuring the commission to tone down its criticism.

**LAWYER FOR ACCUSED NAZI FINTA  
CONCLUDES DEFENSE IN WAR TRIAL**  
By Ben Kayfetz

TORONTO, May 17 (JTA) -- A Canadian lawyer depicted Jews as a "dangerous enemy" in wartime Hungary and claimed the hardships they endured as slave laborers in a Nazi-run brickyard were no worse than the discomfort experienced by people whose vacation goes sour.

Those and similar observations were made by defense attorney Douglas Christie, in the course of his three-day summation to a jury of five men and seven women hearing the case of Imre Finta.

Finta, 77, was an officer in the Nazi-controlled Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie, responsible for the Jewish ghetto in Szege, a city in southern Hungary.

He has been tried on eight counts, including theft of personal property, kidnapping, manslaughter and forcibly confining 8,617 Jews deported from Szege in 1944.

Two survivors from Israel, Meir Schweiger and Mordechai Schnitzer, told of being confined to boxcars for days. Schweiger was sent to Birkenau and Schnitzer to the Strasshof camp in Austria.

According to Christie, the Hungarian officials did not wish to put Jews in boxcars, but how else were the Jews to be transported and where else were they to be sent? he asked.

The deportations were justified, he said, because Jews were considered an "internal security threat."

They were believed to be linked to Communism and in sympathy with the Red Army, which was advancing on Hungary.

In the 1944 climate, Jews were considered "the enemy" and "dangerous," Christie told the jurors. It is a defense tactic he used during the course of the trial. He dismissed the looting of their property by Finta as a form of tax collection.

The Hungarian-born former restaurateur from Hamilton, Ontario, is the first accused war criminal brought to trial under a 1987 amendment to the Criminal Code, which allows Canadian courts to try war crimes suspects for offenses committed on foreign soil.

Christie wound up his summation with an appeal to the judge. "As we judge, so will we be judged," he said, "and that will be the judgment you get from God and history."

Christie, who has been called Canada's "right-wing William Kunstler," has a long record of defending anti-Semites and neo-Nazis in Canada. His clients have included Jim Keegstra, John Ross Taylor, Malcolm Ross and Ernst Zundel, all of whom publicly proclaim that the Holocaust was a Jewish hoax.

His defense of Finta rests on two arguments: that the Nazi collaborator acted on orders and that the 19 Holocaust survivors from many countries who bore witness against him were motivated by revenge. He also challenged their memory and accused Jewish witnesses of lying.

#### EAST GERMANY ASKS SYRIA TO EXTRADITE NAZI BRUNNER

By David Kantor

BONN, May 17 (JTA) -- East Germany announced Wednesday that it has asked Syria to extradite Alois Brunner, one of the most notorious Nazi war criminals known to be alive. He is reportedly living in Damascus.

The Syrian government has not yet responded to the request. Damascus has consistently denied in the past any knowledge of Brunner's whereabouts, and coldly turned down extradition requests by West Germany and France.

East Berlin's move was seen as a further demonstration of good will toward Israel.

Last month, the East German parliament formally acknowledged a measure of responsibility for Nazi crimes against the Jews, which East Germany had denied for over 40 years, and begged forgiveness of Israel and the Jewish people.

Brunner, 78, is held responsible for sending at least 100,000 Jews to death camps. He was considered the right-hand man of Adolf Eichmann, and is believed responsible for deportations of Jews from France, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Greece.

For many years, he served as a consultant to the Syrian government on security affairs.

His long-term protected presence in Syria was publicized over the years by Paris-based Nazi hunters Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, who traveled to Syria on several occasions to protest Brunner's presence in that country.

#### THIRD CEMETERY VANDAL ARRESTED; POLICE WONDER IF IT'S CONTAGIOUS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 17 (JTA) -- Police were not prepared to say Thursday whether the recent spate of cemetery desecrations by Jews in Israel is a contagious fad spreading among the mentally deranged.

That possibility arose when a third Jewish man was detained on suspicion of cemetery vandalism.

Two Jews, described as mentally aberrant, already are in custody for allegedly overturning over 300 headstones at two Haifa cemeteries last weekend.

A householder who lives next to a cemetery in the Lod area east of Tel Aviv telephoned the police early Thursday morning, to report a stranger wandering the neighborhood breaking windows and mumbling to himself.

Police who detained the individual said he talked about cemeteries. An inspection disclosed upturned gravestones and broken flower urns in the military section of a nearby burial ground.

Police also found a wristwatch on one grave, which the 24-year-old suspect admitted belonged to him. Police said the man seemed "unbalanced." He led them to an iron bar, which he said he used to pry loose flower urns and ornaments.

This suspect, like the first arrested on Monday, also reportedly told police he was an "emissary of the messiah," and was acting in response to the desecration of Jews graves in Carpentras in southern France last week. He did not explain why he targeted Jewish graves.

He was sent for a psychiatric examination.

The other suspects, David Goldner and Gershon Tennenbaum, both residents of the Haifa Bay area, identified themselves as ba'al teshuvim -- returnees to Orthodox Judaism -- and members of messianic sects. Both are said to have prior histories of mental aberration.

#### ABIE NATHAN SLAPPED WITH SUMMONS FOR MEETINGS WITH PLO LEADERS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 17 (JTA) -- Peace activist Abie Nathan was slapped with a summons Wednesday upon his return from Tunis, where he met with Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat and other PLO officials.

But the police seem unsure whether to throw him back in jail or ignore his freely admitted violation of the law forbidding contact with the enemy.

Nathan, who recently served a six-month prison term for meeting with Arafat, has an 18-month suspended sentence over his head. He appeared in a Petach Tikva magistrates court Thursday morning as ordered by police and was released on \$5,000 bail.

The bail, in fact, was proposed by police investigators, who now must decide whether to pursue their charges against Nathan.

The court denied a police request to confiscate his passport while the investigation continues, even though Nathan readily admits that he met Arafat again, as he said he would when last released from jail.

He said they discussed the peace process and the intifada and that he sought the release of Israelis held prisoner by Palestinian and Lebanese groups in Lebanon.

## CONSERVATIVE RABBIS URGE A RETURN TO THE FRIDAY EVENING SUNSET SERVICE

By Elena Neuman

KIAMESHA LAKE, N.Y., May 17 (JTA) -- After four decades of conducting mid-evening Kabbalat Shabbat services, Conservative rabbis this week recommended a return to the traditional sunset service preceding Shabbat dinner.

Over 600 rabbis meeting at the Concord Hotel here voted in favor of a resolution to "re-examine the effectiveness of their Sabbath eve programs with the possible goal of evolving worship services closer to the traditional time of sunset."

The vote took place during the largest gathering ever of the Rabbinical Assembly, Conservative Judaism's 1,300-member central body of rabbis.

The change in the time of Friday evening services is intended to shift the observance of the Sabbath from the synagogue to the home.

"The late Friday service is clearly dying," said Rabbi Neil Gilman, associate professor of Jewish philosophy at the Jewish Theological Seminary. "Younger families are interested in a revitalized Sabbath participation with parents, children, grandparents and friends, especially in the home."

With services in the past occurring between 8 and 9 p.m., families would have to break away from their Shabbat dinner early to get to shul in time.

"We haven't had late Friday night services for years," said Rabbi David Nelson of Beth Shalom synagogue in Oak Park, Mich. "People just didn't show up."

Conservative rabbis have actually found that when they canceled the late Friday service, attendance at Saturday morning services improved.

The late evening service began in the years prior to World War II as an attempt to accommodate those Jews who had to work late on Friday or all day on Saturday.

## Stands On Abortion, Conversions

But now that socioeconomic circumstances have changed in recent decades, with fewer Jews compelled to work on the Sabbath, there is less of a need for the late service.

The recommendation on the timing of Friday services was one of approximately 20 resolutions debated at the 90th convention of the Rabbinical Assembly.

Other noteworthy resolutions expressed support for donation of human organs and tissues after death, a woman's right to abortion, the religious activities of the Women of the Wall prayer group in Jerusalem, and the inclusion of Jewish lesbians and gay men in synagogues.

A surprise resolution that sharply criticized the leasing of a Greek Orthodox Church building in the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem by a group of Orthodox Jews was introduced by approximately 70 rabbis during the convention proceedings, and was adopted.

Two other resolutions called for continued support for the Conservative Masorti movement in Israel and the right of the Rabbinical Assembly of Israel to perform conversions by means of the establishment of an institute for conversions there.

The Israeli population on the whole is not religious and not aware of its religious needs, said Rabbi Reuven Hammer.

## SOVIET ANTI-SEMITISM IS LIMITED, INTERNATIONAL RABBIS TELL CONFAB

By Yossi Lempkowicz

BRUSSELS, May 17 (JTA) -- Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union affects only a small part of the population, Moscow's Rabbi Adolf Shayeveitch told more than 100 rabbis from 17 countries at a three-day meeting which ended here Wednesday.

The biennial Conference of European Rabbis brought together rabbis from Western and Eastern Europe, as well as a large delegation from the United States.

They discussed resurgent anti-Semitism, the physical and spiritual well-being of Soviet Jews, and religious Jewry's relations with the European Community, among other topics.

The conference, chaired by Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, outgoing chief rabbi of Britain and the Commonwealth, was held at E.C. headquarters under strict security measures.

According to Rabbi Albert Guigui of Brussels, its primary objective is recognition by the E.C. that it is the main voice for religious Judaism in Europe.

The rabbis met only a few days after the brutal desecration of a Jewish cemetery in Carpentras in southern France.

They took note of the horror expressed by European heads of state and other leading personalities over that incident, and said they appreciated the demonstrations of solidarity with Jews against all forms of anti-Semitism.

The outbreak of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union was a topic of lively debate. The Soviet rabbis recognized as community heads by the Soviet government, Shayeveitch of Moscow and Chaim Levitis of Leningrad, were reported to have said there is not really an upsurge of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

## FANS JEER ISRAELI SOCCER NO-SHOWS AS ISRAEL BEATS SOVIET UNION, 3-2

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 17 (JTA) -- Israel's national soccer team beat the Soviet Union's team 3-2, before 45,000 spectators in a friendly international match at Ramat Gan Stadium on Wednesday night.

It was the first time the two teams had met since 1956, when the Russians trounced the Israelis.

But if revenge was sweet, the game at Ramat Gan was only a sideshow.

The real passion of the fans was directed against three Israeli football superstars, who declined to play because they claimed they were inadequately insured against injuries.

Ronnie Rosenthal, only a week ago an idol of the crowd, was greeted with jeers and pelted with bottles when he took to the field before the game to explain why he wasn't playing.

His colleagues, Eli Ohana and Shalom Tikva, remained under cover but were equally targets of obloquy. The Soviets, on the other hand, were cheered by the disgruntled fans.

Rosenthal told reporters later that if he or the other two international stars were injured in the game, they could face suspension by the European teams for inability to fulfill their lucrative contracts.

But a federation official who ordered Rosenthal off the field commented, "We play football here, not explain how much we are worth."

## JEWISH LEADERS TRY TO ASSURE BUSH THAT BILL DOESN'T CALL FOR QUOTAS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 17 (JTA) -- Representatives of two Jewish organizations tried Wednesday to convince President Bush that a major civil rights bill now before Congress would not result in establishing minority hiring quotas.

But a representative of a third Jewish group told the president that his organization opposes passage of the Kennedy-Hawkins Civil Rights Act of 1990, at least as it now stands.

The bill is aimed at restoring protection against racial or religious job discrimination that supporters believe were weakened by several Supreme Court decisions last year.

Bush has been trying to find a way of supporting the legislation.

At a news conference Wednesday, the president said he hopes to narrow differences on the legislation. "We're working hard to get agreement," he said.

One of the president's main concerns is that the bill would result in quotas.

But both Meyer Eisenberg, chairman of the National Legal Affairs Committee of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and Judith Golub, assistant Washington representative of the American Jewish Committee, told Bush on Wednesday that their groups would not be supporting the legislation if they thought it would lead to quotas.

However, David Zwiebel, general counsel for Agudath Israel of America, told Bush the Orthodox group is opposed to the bill unless some changes can be made.

He said language was needed to get around what he called the "conservative corporate counsel" factor.

He explained that such counsels would "advise their clients to play it safe and adopt a de facto quota system" to avoid the possibility of liability.

## HEALTH OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER BEGIN HAS 'IMPROVED IMPRESSIVELY'

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 17 (JTA) -- The "general condition" of former Prime Minister Menachem Begin has "improved impressively" since he was admitted to Sha'ar Zedek Hospital Wednesday, a hospital spokesman said.

Begin, 77, was diagnosed as having a mild case of pneumonia, which was not life-threatening, said Dr. Motti Lifschitz, deputy medical director of the hospital.

Begin was admitted at the advice of his doctor.

The former prime minister's daughters, Hassia and Leah, nevertheless spent much of Thursday at his bedside in the geriatric department, as did Begin's loyal aide, Yehiel Kadishai.

Kadishai told reporters that Begin skimmed the headlines about the ongoing negotiations between Likud and prospective coalition partners.

"Let's hope it will be all right," Kadishai quoted Begin, but said the ex-prime minister "gave no advice."

Begin has been a semi-recluse since his unexpected resignation from office in 1983. He has played no part in Likud politics since then, although he obviously remains loyal to the party he led to power in 1977.

## SAMMY DAVIS JR. REMEMBERED AS COMMITTED TO JEWISHNESS

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, May 17 (JTA) -- Sammy Davis Jr., who died Wednesday in Los Angeles at the age of 64, had his first contact with Jews during his boyhood in New York, when he fell in love with the Yiddish theater of the 1930s.

"They didn't bother me down there," the legendary black entertainer remembered later. "Although I couldn't understand a word, I would just laugh and cry along with the rest of the audience."

He returned more seriously to Judaism in the late 1950s, when he studied with Rabbi Max Nussbaum at Temple Israel of Hollywood, and then underwent a conversion ceremony in Las Vegas.

It was no snap decision. As he explained in an interview 20 years later, after much reading and soul-searching following an auto crash that cost him an eye, "I concluded that Judaism was essential to my survival."

In Jewish literature, he said, "I found strength and dignity. I wanted to know how a people could survive for so many years, being constantly persecuted. I wanted to know what gave them that inner strength, and when I found out, I found peace in it."

The conversion of the short, one-eyed black entertainer led to a string of jokes and anecdotes, which redoubled when Davis married the Swedish film beauty May Britt.

Rabbi William Kramer, who officiated at the ceremony at Davis' home, has retained a photo of the wedding party, which included Frank Sinatra and Peter Lawford.

### Cruel Remarks

There were some cruel remarks about the Jewish "nigger," but most of the jokes were more affectionate, such as the one attributed to Britt. When it became public that she would marry the entertainer, she was asked if her parents back home had expressed any objection to the match.

"Why should they?" she supposedly responded. "There is no anti-Semitism in Sweden."

Britt was converted at Temple Israel and, if anything, took her new faith even more seriously than did her husband.

In later years, Davis visited Dachau and admitted that he became as prejudiced against Germans as some whites are against blacks. In a visit to Israel, he expressed his delight at encountering so many dark-skinned Jews.

When "Fiddler on the Roof" became a musical hit, there was talk of mounting an all-black version and Davis was asked whether he would accept the role of Tevye. He declined, saying, "There has to be respect for certain things, and a black Tevye would be stretching it too far."

After a while, the jokes about Davis' Jewishness stopped as his friends realized how committed the entertainer was to his faith.

An example is seen in Davis' face-off with the imperious movie mogul Samuel Goldwyn. When Goldwyn insisted on filming through the High Holy Days, Davis asked for 24 hours off. Goldwyn scoffed at the request but relented when Davis assured him that he would spend the entire time in a synagogue.

"All right," Goldwyn finally agreed. "But I'll check up on you. I hope I'll be able to recognize you in shul."