

**75th ANNIVERSARY YEAR****WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 1992****VOL. 70, NO. 73****DETENTION OF ISRAELI IN CAIRO PRISON  
THREATENS CONFRONTATION WITH EGYPT**  
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 14 (JTA) -- The continued detention of Israeli furniture importer David Ovitz in an Egyptian jail has become a domestic political issue here and has the potential to explode into an international diplomatic confrontation with Cairo.

Bitterness toward Egypt was evident in Defense Minister Moshe Arens' remarks to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

Arens told the panel Tuesday that the peace treaty Israel signed with Egypt in 1979 has had little practical significance.

According to David Ivri, director general of the Defense Ministry, it is not a treaty at all but a cease-fire agreement that has lasted 15 years.

Ivri, who spoke at a symposium in Tel Aviv, said relations between the two countries deteriorated after Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated in October 1981.

According to him, Sadat's successor, President Hosni Mubarak, has no interest in Israel's continued existence.

Foreign Minister David Levy sent a message Monday to the Egyptian foreign minister, Amre Moussa, demanding the immediate release of Ovitz, who is suspected of espionage.

Although he has been held in custody for more than 60 days, no formal charges have been brought against the Israeli.

The Givatayim resident was remanded for an additional 45 days by an Egyptian court last week and is not expected to be released in the immediate future, despite Levy's tough note.

The Israeli foreign minister seemed to favor quiet, behind-the-scenes diplomacy. But he was spurred to more visible action by criticism from his political archrival, Ariel Sharon, and by mounting public pressure generated by Ovitz family members.

**Israel 'Not Doing Enough'**

Housing Minister Sharon complained at the weekly Cabinet meeting Sunday that "Israel is not doing enough to protect its citizens imprisoned in Arab countries."

He demanded "greater sensitivity and firmness toward those holding Israeli citizens unjustly."

Levy rejected the criticism. He said Israeli diplomats at home were acting "with dedication" to secure the release of Israeli prisoners at every level of government, including contacts with President Mubarak.

But he admitted that so far, those efforts have been of no avail.

During an election campaign visit to Yavne, Levy said "Ovitz is completely innocent" and "is being blamed for something he hasn't done."

An Egyptian court rejected an offer by the Israeli consul general in Cairo, Ronni Porat, to vouch for Ovitz's presence at any hearing if he would be released on bail.

Nor was the court moved by the fact that Ovitz's wife, Yael, is three months' pregnant.

The Israeli ambassador to Egypt, Ephraim Dubek, said in a radio interview Monday that the

Egyptians are unlikely to free Ovitz until "they are convinced of his innocence."

The Egyptian ambassador in Tel Aviv, Mohammed Basiouny, said "Ovitz will be released once the investigation is over and once he is proven innocent."

Ovitz is not the only Israeli national imprisoned in Egypt. The others are three Israeli Arabs, members of the Mussarti family of Ramla.

Farres Mussarti, 41; his son, Majid, 21; and his 17-year-old daughter, Faya, were arrested around Feb. 1 while traveling in Egypt and are awaiting trial for espionage.

Farres Mussarti reportedly confessed, implicating Ovitz, who is known to have employed him as an interpreter on furniture-buying trips to Egypt.

Interviewed in his cell by an Israeli journalist, Ovitz insisted the Egyptians have "nothing against me." He is confined to a small cell, stinking of urine, with no idea what will happen to him, the journalist reported.

**JEWISH GROUPS URGE PRESSURE  
ON SYRIA TO END ABUSE OF JEWS**  
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 14 (JTA) -- Two Jewish organizations have called on the international community to put pressure on Syria to end what they see as the country's holding of its 5,000 Jews as a "hostage community."

The call for international action came in a 107-page report on Syrian human rights abuses released by the Council for the Rescue of Syrian Jews and the World Jewish Congress.

The report was independently prepared by Professor Irwin Cotler of McGill University in Montreal, a renowned human rights lawyer, who personally visited Syria to gather information.

"The report documents in detail Syria's failure to comply not only with its own constitution and legal guarantees granted to all Syrian citizens, but Syria's failure to live up to international agreements to which they are signatory," said Gilbert Kahn, executive director of the Council for the Rescue of Syrian Jews.

The report, which accuses the Syrian government of "state-supported anti-Semitism," was released Tuesday, a day after a delegation of Syrian Jews was reported to have called on Syrian President Hafez Assad in Damascus.

Joubran Kourieh, Assad's spokesman, told the Associated Press that the delegation, led by Chief Rabbi Ibrahim Hamra, met with Assad to congratulate him on re-election to his fourth term as president, which began March 13.

"The participation of the Jewish citizens with other citizens in the (re-election) referendum and the popular celebrations reflected their strong identity with their nation and their pride in their citizenship," the rabbi was quoted as saying.

"A hostage community such as described in the report is unable to act in a free manner and therefore such reports from Damascus must be minimally viewed with at least some suspicion," said Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress.

But Kahn noted that the publicity given to the meeting by the Syrian government is "evi-

dence of the growing international awareness of and concern for the plight of Syria's Jews."

Cotler's study, entitled "Syrian Jewry, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law," documents that in a country with widespread human rights violations, Jews are the victims of the worst discrimination.

Among the abuses against Syrian Jews listed in the report are the denial of the right to emigrate, including for family reunification; the constant "harassment, intimidation and arbitrary, even clandestine arrest"; and the fact that Jews "are the only minority whose passports and identification cards note their religion."

The Cotler report calls for release of Syrian Jews now in jail and urges freedom of emigration and the abolishment of the mention of Jewish religious affiliation in identity documents.

The report also recommends that international organizations and human rights groups be given "access to Syrian territory to investigate charges of human rights violations."

The WJC and the Council for the Rescue of Syrian Jews plan to submit the Cotler report to the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

#### **PENTAGON WILL CONTINUE FINANCING ARROW MISSILE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT** By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 14 (JTA) -- Military cooperation between Israel and the United States appears alive and well regardless of the recent strains in their political relations.

The United States will continue to fund development of Israel's Arrow anti-missile missile system by the government-owned Israel Aircraft Industries, despite its history of failure to date.

IAI, for its part, plans to raise capital on the New York and Tel Aviv stock exchanges, its director general, Moshe Keret, disclosed Monday. IAI has also signed an agreement with the General Dynamics Corp. to build F-16 jet fighters on an American-style assembly line.

The Arrow, Israel's contribution to the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative, was designed to be the world's most sophisticated anti-missile system.

The Pentagon has just signed an agreement with IAI allowing it to proceed with the second stage of the Arrow project, Keret announced.

Defense Secretary Dick Cheney pledged last month that the United States would pay 70 percent of the costs.

U.S. participation will total \$320 million. The United States funded 78 percent of the first stage costs, which amounted to \$160 million.

IAI plans to finance its share of the second-stage costs through the stock issues and by "privatizing" some of its assets, Keret said.

The Arrow, known in Hebrew as the Hetz, has had a troubled history to date. Its first three prototypes failed in their test flights last year, the third in a spectacular midair explosion after going out of control.

In January, the Arrow project manager, Dov Raviv, chairman of IAI's top secret Malam factory, was suspended in the wake of allegations he took tens of thousands of dollars in bribes.

The value of SDI itself, a pet project of the Reagan administration, has been called into question in the United States since the Cold War ended with the demise of the Soviet Union.

It could face severe budget cuts or abandonment by the time the Arrow is ready for operational deployment in 1996.

#### **INTIFADA VIOLENCE IN TERRITORIES INCREASED IN MARCH, KNESSET TOLD** By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 14 (JTA) -- After a lull, intifada violence increased in the West Bank and Gaza Strip last month.

The number of assaults by Palestinians in the territories rose from 140 in February to 263 in March, Defense Minister Moshe Arens said in a report Tuesday to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

Overall, disturbances increased from 1,641 in February to 2,973 in March, he said.

A senior Israel Defense Force officer told the committee the sharp increase could be attributed to improved weather, the end of the Moslem holy month of Ramadan and the failure of the peace process to proceed the way the Palestinians hoped it would.

About 1,396 Palestinians have been killed since the intifada began in December 1987. Israel claims that 656 of the deaths were at the hands of fellow Palestinians while Israeli security forces accounted for 740 fatalities.

Meanwhile, the IDF on Tuesday demolished the homes of two West Bank Arabs believed responsible for the murder of an Israeli, Shlomo Yihya, of Moshav Kadima last November.

The suspects were identified as Jamal Muhsein and Iyyad Hizran. Hizran is also accused of stabbing a border policeman near Tulkarm several days after Yihya was killed.

#### **ARAB ACCUSED OF ATTEMPTED BOMBINGS DURING GOLDA TRIP EXTRADITED TO U.S.** By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, April 14 (JTA) -- An Iraqi-born Palestinian accused of trying to bomb three Israeli-owned businesses in New York in 1973 has been extradited to the United States from Italy, the FBI said Monday.

The announcement coincided with the arraignment in federal court in New York on Monday of the suspect, Khalid Duhan al-Jawary, 46.

The explosive devices, which failed to detonate because of faulty fuses, were set to coincide with the visit of then-Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, the bureau said in a statement.

In January 1991, Italian agents arrested Jawary, who was using an alias, after FBI fingerprints identified him as a wanted fugitive.

In 1987, FBI agents arrested another wanted Middle Easterner, Fawaz Younis, who was taken into custody in international waters in the Mediterranean Sea. After being brought to the United States on charges of participating in the 1985 hijacking of a Jordanian airliner, Younis was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

FBI Director William Sessions said the capture of Jawary shows that the United States is dedicated to bringing to justice those who attempt terrorist acts here, "no matter where or how long the search may take."

A U.S. indictment charged Jawary with leaving two powerful bombs in the trunks of rented cars outside Israel Discount Bank and First Israeli Bank and Trust in Manhattan in March 1973.

A third bomb, more powerful than the other two, was similarly found in a rented car parked outside an El Al warehouse near Kennedy Airport.

The fingerprints found in all the cars matched those found in a hotel room Jawary had taken.

## HAMBURG DEVELOPERS GET GO-AHEAD TO BUILD MALL OVER JEWISH CEMETERY

By David Kantor

BONN, April 14 (JTA) -- Months of protests by Jewish groups here and abroad apparently have failed to save a 350-year-old Jewish cemetery in a Hamburg suburb from being bulldozed.

Developers planning a shopping mall on the site announced Tuesday that construction would be resumed.

A Hamburg court ruled last week that the 1950 decision by a group of Hamburg Jews to sell the cemetery in Ottensen to commercial interests voided its protected status.

A spokesman for the Hamburg municipality rejected Jewish demands that the authorities make available the funds needed to buy back the site from its present owners.

"It is appalling. Men and women all over the world should protest the injustices committed in Hamburg," Elie Wiesel, the Nobel laureate, declared in New York.

"It is not too late for Germany to change its course," he added.

Work on the mall was halted last month when European Jewish groups, joined by sympathizers from the United States, staged a series of demonstrations at the unused cemetery, which is said to contain about 4,000 graves. They vowed to throw themselves in front of the earthmoving machinery.

In New York, 10,000 people conducted a protest prayer vigil in front of the German Consulate last month.

Rabbi Hertz Frankel, chairman of Athra Kadisha, the International Society for the Preservation of Holy Sites, was invited with several New York politicians to convey their concerns to consular officials.

The officials told Frankel that the message would be passed on to the appropriate officials in Germany.

Frankel, who also serves as spokesman for the Hasidic community in Brooklyn's Williamsburg section, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of his dismay at the court decision.

Athra Kadisha has been requesting a private meeting with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl for the past six months, but it has repeatedly been told that he is too busy.

"Kohl is the only one who can do something about this, and he refuses to meet with us," said Frankel.

"Law or no law, this is an indication of something deeper. I'm afraid that the Germans' attitudes toward the Jews haven't changed very much. Outside of the law, where is the understanding of moral and ethical values?" he asked.

(JTA staff intern Alexandra J. Wall in New York contributed to this report.)

## ARGENTINE JEWISH CEMETERY HIT AGAIN

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) -- A Jewish cemetery outside the Argentine capital that suffered extensive anti-Semitic vandalism last year was sprayed with bullets from unidentified passersby on the night of April 9, the Latin American Jewish Congress has reported.

Two spent 9-mm bullets and shell casings were found at the gates of the cemetery in Berazategui. The judge investigating the incident went to the scene and characterized the attack as "a criminal deed with racial discrimination."

## FRENCH COURT CHARGES VICHY OFFICIALS, BUT IT'S UNCERTAIN THEY WILL BE TRIED

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS, April 14 (JTA) -- The Bordeaux court of justice formally charged two former officials of the Vichy regime with crimes against humanity Tuesday.

But it remained uncertain whether Maurice Papon and Rene Bousquet, both 82, will stand trial for their offenses, which include the deportation of Jews from the Bordeaux region of southwestern France during World War II.

Both have been accused before, only to have the charges thrown out on technicalities.

Nevertheless, the Bordeaux court's announcement was welcomed as thousands of people demonstrated all over France to protest the freeing of Nazi collaborator Paul Touvier by the Paris Court of Appeals on Monday.

Touvier, 77, headed the Vichy militia in Lyon. He was also charged with numerous crimes against humanity. But the Paris court dismissed all counts for "lack of evidence."

That decision triggered cries of outrage. The French Parliament delayed opening its Tuesday session to allow members of the National Assembly to join protest marches in Paris. Demonstrations were also held in Lyon.

Even French President Francois Mitterrand was taken aback by the verdict. Surprise "is an understatement," he told reporters.

But it has long been an open secret that the highest government circles, including Mitterrand, opposed the trial of Touvier or of any former Vichy official on grounds that it would open old wounds and imperil the "civil peace."

In the southern French city of Toulouse, Jewish students staged a hunger strike on the steps of the City Hall and explained to young onlookers what happened in France during the war.

Touvier, who was twice sentenced to death in absentia after World War II, lived in hiding for many years under the protection of Roman Catholic clergy and once was actually pardoned by President Georges Pompidou.

That attitude has raised concern that Papon and Bousquet may also evade justice. Bousquet was chief of the Vichy police. Papon, who headed the Vichy administration in Bordeaux, carried out his orders to round up and deport Jews.

Legal circles said it may be months or years before they are brought to trial, if ever.

## JEV ELECTED TO ITALY'S PARLIAMENT

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, April 14 (JTA) -- One of Rome's leading Jewish citizens was elected to Parliament in the general elections last week.

Enrico Modigliani, a 54-year-old businessman, ran on the Republican Party ticket, one of the smaller Italian political parties and the only one that has been consistently supportive of Israel.

He has been active in Jewish affairs since his youth and is a committed Zionist, of which he made no secret in his election campaign. A former Zionist youth leader, Modigliani is now a senior member of the Rome Jewish community and the Federation of Italian Jewish Communities.

He was one of the founders of Rome's Jewish newspaper, Shalom. "Everyone, I think, is aware of my Jewish commitment," he said in a pre-election interview.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:  
JEWS IN MOSLEM LANDS OF OLD USSR  
FRIGHTENED BY GROWING INSTABILITY**  
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 12 (JTA) -- The estimated 250,000 Jews who live in the six Moslem republics of the former Soviet Union feel endangered by the unstable conditions as the newly independent states seek to define themselves.

Political instability, deteriorating economic conditions, ethnic conflicts, increased anti-Semitism and rising Islamic fundamentalism are all contributing to the fears of Jews in Central Asia, according to Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

Cardin, who also chairs the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, made this assessment after recently visiting the capitals of three of the republics: Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan; Tashkent, Uzbekistan; and Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

She was accompanied by Martin Wenick, the National Conference's executive director, and Betsy Gidwitz, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who is assistant treasurer of the National Conference.

The purpose of the trip was to assess the situation of the Jewish communities in the three republics, Cardin said. There are about 100,000 Jews in Uzbekistan, 60,000 in Kazakhstan and 10,000 to 12,000 in Tajikistan. Smaller Jewish populations are in the other Moslem republics: Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan.

The Jews living there are either Bukharans, who have lived in the region for centuries, or Ashkenazi Jews, who came there during World War II fleeing the Nazis or were moved to the region as part of the effort to "Sovietize" the republics.

**A World 'Out Of Control'**

"The leaders of the Jewish communities are terrified," Cardin said. They are in a "world somewhat out of control."

The new nations are moving from slavery to freedom, but their political leadership has no experience in the democratic process or with majority rule, Cardin said. They were trained in Communist ideology and practice.

These newly independent republics want to assert their individuality, Cardin explained. This means first of all abandoning the Russian language for their native languages. This already puts the Jews at odds, since most of them speak Russian as their main language.

Cardin said that as the new nations exert their national identities, this could unleash "anti-social behavior" against the minorities in each republic, which include not only Jews but Russians and Germans.

The American group also wanted to assess the growing Islamic fundamentalism in the republics, where Iran and Turkey are both vying for influence.

During its visit, Cardin's group saw that Islamic fundamentalism was already making inroads in Tajikistan, where an Iranian Embassy has already been established.

Cardin witnessed an Islamic fundamentalist demonstration in Dushanbe, in which demonstrators carried a banner saying "Death to Israel" on one side and "Death to Americans" on the other.

She said the community in Dushanbe is the most frightened of the three Jewish communities

visited. Mainly Bukharan, it has always felt an integral part of the city. Its main synagogue is in the center of the capital.

"Since the independence, there has been a major increase in anti-Semitism and a sense that the government is not prepared or able to deal with this threat," Cardin said.

**More Sensitivity In Kazakhstan**

This was basically true in all three republics, where, because of concern for their own insecurity, the governments have failed to move against anti-Semitism. While anti-Semitic literature is not allowed to be published, it is imported from outside and freely available at newsstands.

But in Kazakhstan, "we found sensitivity to the rights of minorities," Cardin said. The reason may be that the Kazakhs are not a majority in their own country, so they understand that pluralism and diversity are essential, she said.

But one government minister who met with the American Jewish group warned that an explosion could take place.

Because of the government instability and economic disarray, most Jews want to leave, Cardin said.

"They are concerned there is no future," she said. "The majority have begun to apply for letters of invitation from Israel."

But Cardin added that many are in contact with relatives and friends in Israel, who have told them about the hardships that Jewish immigrants are enduring.

So some of the Jews believe they can wait out the uncertainty. Others fear leaving after their families have lived in the area for decades or even centuries.

Cardin said the Jews in the republics have strong family ties, so leaving does not mean just a couple and perhaps their children, but also in-laws and grandchildren or grandparents.

The United States and other Western countries have to help these republics, not just economically but also in moving toward democracy and a free society, Cardin said.

She believes much can be done through the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which all of the former Soviet republics have joined.

**Use Of Jackson-Vanik Urged**

The CSCE, which was used to help press for emigration and other rights of Soviet Jews, has an established history allowing pressure to be exerted for human rights or democratic practices, she said.

Cardin believes that the embassies and consular offices being opened in the republics by the United States and other countries will also have an influence. So will non-governmental organizations, which have shown they can be effective in the CSCE.

As for economic aid, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry recently issued a statement endorsing U.S. and other Western support for the newly independent republics. It also supports lifting restrictions imposed on the former Soviet Union, which would allow such steps as extending credit and developing energy resources.

But at the same time, the National Conference has urged that the Jackson-Vanik Amendment be extended to the new republics, to ensure that free emigration is allowed. "We believe it was a very effective instrument" with the former Soviet government, Cardin said.