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BEGIN FINDS IMPROVEMENT IN ISRAEL'S INTERNATIONAL STATUS

ISRAEL WATCHES SYRIAN WAR BUILDUP

TEL AVIV (WNS) -- Israel is closely watching the "significant" Syrian buildup on the Jordanian border, Premier Menachem Begin told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee. He said the Syrian buildup is not aimed at Israel but appears to be an attempt to coerce Jordan into cancelling the Arab summit meeting.

The meeting opened on schedule in Amman, but with the absence of five rejectionist countries -- Syria, Lebanon, South Yemen, Libya, and Algeria -- and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Those countries opposed the summit conference because of the division in the Arab world over the Iraqi-Iranian war.

Jordan ignored the Syrian threat, apparently relying on its very strong armored corps and highly mobile army which are considered quite capable of repulsing any Syrian attack. Nevertheless, Israeli military observers warned that while the Syrian troop concentrations are of a demonstrative nature, the situation could get out of hand. They recalled Syria's attempted invasion of Jordan in 1970 when King Hussein was battling Palestinian terrorists. Military sources reported that Syrian units deployed facing Israel on the Golan Heights have been unusually quiet, indicating a signal from Damascus that Syria has no intention of moving against Israel.

REAGAN WILL SUPPORT CAMP DAVID ACCORDS

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- Both Premier Menachem Begin and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir told the Cabinet that Israel's international standing is improving. Begin was reporting on his visit to the United States and Shamir on his official two-day visit to West Germany. But the Cabinet seemed to be in a state of waiting to see what develops when Ronald Reagan takes office as President in January.

Begin said he had received the impression that the Reagan Administration, like that of President Carter, would continue to support Middle East negotiations on the basis of the Camp David accords.

The Premier, who met with Carter, but not

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PRIME MINISTER MENACHEM BEGIN WITH EDWIN SHAPIRO (LEFT) AND GAYNOR I. JACOBSON, PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, RESPECTIVELY, OF HIAS, THE HEBREW IMMIGRANT AID SOCIETY, ON THE OCCASION OF THE HIAS SPECIALISTS CONFERENCE, "MIGRATION IN THE EIGHTIES," HELD THIS YEAR IN JERUSALEM AS PART OF THE HIAS CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION. SOME 40 EMIGRATION EXPERTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD PARTICIPATED IN THE CONFERENCE, WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY HIAS BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JEWISH AGENCY, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT, U.S. IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE, JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE AND THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION, AS WELL AS OTHER GROUPS.

TELL TALES

"One Man Plus The Truth
Constitutes A Majority"

To Our
Christian Friends

(IN THIS ERA OF ECUMENISM WE BRING YOU THE FOLLOWING COLUMN PREPARED IN 1961 AND REPRINTED ANNUALLY IN THE CHANUKAH EDITION.)

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa. And there are Christmas trees, too! No one asked but an innocuous wire service story, datelined Vatican City, and printed in the local press may have caused some concern among our neighbors.

The story quotes a Vatican weekly newspaper saying Santa Claus represents a "monstrous substitution" for the Christ child and "offends the faith."

The editorial in L'Osservatore della Domenica also assailed the Christmas tree as "an attempt to substitute for the crib... and a certain sense of naturalism and paganism."

The objection apparently stems from the general public's acceptance of St. Nick and the tree as indicative of the holiday to the gradual exclusion of the true religious conception, the Nativity.

A strict religious interpretation of the Holy Day should unquestionably be total reverence and complete compliance with the Holy Writ. Those devout souls among us always have and will continue to adhere to the rigid theological celebration of the occasion and no amount of persuasion (if attempted) could dissuade them.

But Christmas Day with no distraction from all the solemnity it stands for, has, through the centuries grown, expanded, magnified into a spirit of Christmas. What started as a one-day observance is now a weeks-long holiday. What began with personal greetings of cheer from one to another is now the exchange of hundreds of millions of cards expressing joy. What commenced as an occasion for the discreet dispensation of charity for the less fortunate has developed into the indiscriminate giving and receiving of gifts. The once simple recreation of one's version of the Crib had developed into addenda like trees, holly wreaths, tinsel and lights.

An occasion that was originally celebrated by just those of the Christian faith, now finds

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Palm

MORTUARIES AND
MEMORIAL PARKS

Yahrzeits Tonight At Beth Sholom

(Friday, Dec. 12, 1980)
Dorothy Katz
Millard G. Gray
Etta Israelson
Dr. Isaac Goldberg
Samuel Wolpert
Dora Schlofsky
Mollie Weiner
Harry Plotkin
Myer H. Meltzer
Benjamin Spector
Isaac Diamondstone
Fanny Goldberg
Dr. Alexander Mason
Isaac Laxer

Irving Roth
Samuel Kuperman
Louis Berger
Rose Faberman
Sarah Siegel
Ethel Elias
Albert Waller
Lillian Rosenberg
Bernard Goldstein
Betty Beckwith
Cantor Herman Kinnory
Cantor Herman
Kinnory
Jacob Bernard Feldman
Jacob Bernard