

AGREEMENT ON EMERGENCY ECONOMIC PROGRAM AVERTS A GENERAL STRIKE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 16 (JTA) -- The government and Histadrut reached an agreement early this morning that will soften the effects of the emergency economic program on wage-earners without appreciably altering the plan itself.

The agreement came shortly before dawn, only hours before a nationwide general strike would have begun had no accord been reached. It was hailed by Premier Shimon Peres who told reporters that the emergency recovery plan for which he vigorously fought is now a fact.

Peres, weary from marathon negotiations which allowed him little sleep for the past two nights, was nevertheless happy and smiling. He said he was "full of satisfaction" that Histadrut "comprehended" the gravity of the economic problems facing the country. He cautioned, however, that the new program can succeed only if the public cooperates.

Histadrut Secretary General Yisrael Kessar was also pleased. The government will not impose its economic measures by administrative decree as planned. While wages and salaries will erode in the coming months, their fall will not be as steep as originally expected. Best of all, from the trade union point of view, concessions were won in the give-and-take of normal labor negotiations without resorting to a crippling general strike.

Talks are continuing on the government's intention to dismiss about three percent of the civil service workforce. Prospects for an early agreement are good.

Provisions In The Agreement

The agreement reached this morning provides for the 14 percent cost-of-living increment for July salaries, payable in August. Public sector employees will receive an 11 percent increment. An additional one-time "festival bonus" will be paid before the High Holidays in September.

From October through March, 1986, workers will receive four percent cost-of-living increments per month, unless the inflation rate falls below four percent, as the government hopes. The government will pay full compensation to the poorest-paid workers and welfare recipients.

Trade union and Treasury experts agree that wages will decline in the late summer, pick up again next winter and will reach their present levels by March or April, 1986, if all goes well.

Leading economists cautioned, however, that the success of the program will depend on the diligence with which the government implements its budget-cutting in the next few months. The two economists credited with being the "brains" behind the government's plan are Prof. Eitan Berglass of Tel Aviv University and Prof. Michael Bruno of Jerusalem.

They told reporters today that the plan was not substantially weakened by some additional compensation to workers which the government agreed to this morning.

Peres Wins High Points For Leadership

According to political pundits, Peres won high points for leadership in the way he persevered to push the economic program through a divided Cabinet and his subsequent negotiations with Histadrut. His standing with the public rose considerably and will remain high if the economic program achieves the kind of success its authors hope for and predict, they said.

This has already led to speculation that, riding the crest of its leader's new popularity, the Labor Party may contrive to break up its coalition with Likud later in the year and chance new elections to become the governing party of Israel.

LAWMAKERS, JUST RETURNED FROM VISIT TO THE USSR, SAY SOVIET ADHERENCE TO HELSINKI ACCORD IS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS AT UPCOMING U.S. - USSR SUMMIT

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, July 16 (JTA) -- Six members of Congress, who have just returned from their first visit to the Soviet Union, declared today that increased emigration of Soviet Jews and an end to discrimination against refuseniks and their families would pave the way for success at the upcoming summit meeting between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Representatives, whose trip was under the auspices of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, said at a Capitol Hill press conference that they made this point in a letter sent today to Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin here.

"We all feel very strongly that the Soviet willingness to abide by the terms of the Helsinki Agreement of 1975 is necessary to build a foundation for the success of the summit," Rep. Steve Bartlett (R. Texas) said. "As of today, the Soviets do not abide by the terms of the Helsinki agreement."

Bartlett said that the refuseniks, with whom the legislators met with in Moscow and Leningrad, all saw the summit as an opportunity to press their case. He said they believe their "only hope" is for pressure from western governments and public opinion.

A Target Of Opportunity

Rep. Barbara Mikulski (D. Md.) said that while totalitarian regimes are "oppressive, rigid and inflexible," the transition in the Soviet Union under the new leadership of Gorbachev does present the U.S. with a "target of opportunity to advance the human rights agenda."

She said this should first be done on the upcoming 10th anniversary of the Helsinki accords meeting in Helsinki which will be the first meeting between Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

But she said the U.S. should be "cautious" about its expectations. "Just because you wear Gucci loafers and you have an intellectual wife doesn't mean there will be a breakthrough," she said.

Noting that she is a liberal Democrat who has long fought for human rights and peace, Mikulski said, "I

am more pessimistic about change after this trip." She asked how the Soviets can be trusted to keep an agreement. She noted that after the Soviet Union signed the Helsinki accords, which requires emigration for family reunions, the number of people who want to leave but have been denied visas can be counted, but an arms agreement would be more difficult to monitor.

However, Rep. Jim Moody (D. Wis.) said that most refuseniks and Soviet government officials with whom he talked agreed that an increase in emigration was "directly correlated" to the condition of U.S.-Soviet relations. He said they pointed out that during detente, emigration was high.

The lawmakers, who spent seven days in the USSR, split up into two groups, visiting refuseniks' homes where they met with groups of nine to ten people, including the wives of imprisoned refuseniks. Rep. Louis Stokes (D. Ohio) and Michael Bilirakis (R. Fla.) said while the lawmakers had long supported the cause of Soviet Jewry, they did not fully understand the problem until their visit.

"Unless you go, unless you see with your own eyes... you don't know anything about it," Bilirakis said.

Plight Of Refuseniks Deteriorating

Bartlett said the "plight of Soviet refuseniks seems not only not to be improving but is deteriorating." He said that emigration dropped to 36 in June and during June and the first few days of July four refuseniks were arrested which he was told was an "unprecedented" number.

Mikulski said that when she raised the issue of Ida Nudel with Soviet officials dealing with the U.S., they claimed to not have heard of her. She said the general attitude of Soviet officials with whom they talked was that either there was not an emigration problem or that it was an internal matter.

The lawmakers said they were particularly moved by the plight of the wives of the imprisoned refuseniks. Mikulski also spoke about the children of the refuseniks, the older ones being refused admission to schools of higher education and the younger ones "harassed in the schools with filthy anti-Semitic propaganda."

She said efforts must not only be made to help increase emigration, but to see that those still in the USSR "are at least allowed to live the way any other Soviet citizen is allowed to live and not endure this persecution."

The lawmakers were especially annoyed by the KGB surveillance which they said was everywhere and was part of the daily lives of the refuseniks. Rep. Ben Erdreich (D. Ala.) said that when talking to people at the Moscow Synagogue they frequently had to move as people he was told were KGB spies kept approaching.

Bartlett brought back a statement given him by long time refusenik Alexandr Lerner and signed by Lerner and 12 other refusenik intellectuals urging the creation of an international committee for Soviet refusenik intellectuals to press for their right to emigrate and to defend them against the loss of their professional status.

Senate and House Pass Resolutions

Meanwhile, the House held two hours of debate today in which members outlined the plight of individual Soviet Jews. Last week both the Senate and House passed resolutions urging the USSR to "release immedi-

ately Anatoly Shcharansky, Yosif Begun and all other Prisoners of Conscience" and allow them along with other long term refuseniks such as Ida Nudel and Vladimir Slepach to emigrate.

The resolution also urged the Soviet Union to allow those thousands of Jews who wish to join their relatives abroad to leave the Soviet Union this year and to pledge that such cases will be dealt with expeditiously and in a humanitarian way during the next three years.

The resolution was introduced in the House as an amendment to the Foreign Aid bill by Rep. Dante Fascell (D. Fla.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and in the Senate by Majority leader Robert Dole (R. Kas.).

ISRAEL HAVING SUCCESS IN STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 16 (JTA) -- Israel has "had quite a lot of success" in its efforts to strengthen relations with Third World countries, particularly Black African states, most of which broke diplomatic ties with Israel after the 1973 Yom Kippur War and have not yet restored them, David Kimche, Director General of the Foreign Ministry, told reporters today.

"We are in a position to talk to the heads of at least 12-15 African states whenever we wish. We are in a position to talk about intimate things. We have close relations even if there are not direct diplomatic relations," Kimche said. He also observed that Israel's trade with many African states is flourishing, in many cases much more so than in the days Israel had full diplomatic relations with them.

According to Kimche, who has devoted considerable time and effort to improve relations with Asian and African nations, many Black African leaders privately expressed their regrets that their countries broke with Israel 15 years ago. But they are deterred from resuming formal ties for fear of losing promised or actual aid from Arab countries.

Fear Subversion By PLO, Libya

In many cases, Arab promises have "far outstripped" the actual aid received, Kimche said. But some African leaders admitted to him, in their frequent but unpublicized meetings, that they feared subversion by the Palestine Liberation Organization and by Libya. "One African President with whom I met not long ago, said to me: 'You know why I am so hesitant to re-establish relations? I don't want to be assassinated.'"

Kimche added, "Libyan subversion is very much in the forefront of the thinking of African leaders today. They have seen the example of Chad."

After the 1973 war, only Malawi, Lesotho and Swaziland retained diplomatic ties with Israel. Liberia and Zaire recently restored them. Israel's hope that their example would be followed by others has failed to materialize up to now.

Nevertheless, Kimche quoted one African leader as telling him recently, "If only I hadn't expelled the Israelis who were working in this country, our country would be looking very, very different in terms of its agriculture and its technological advances."

Highly placed Israeli sources disclosed, meanwhile, that Egypt has ceased its earlier efforts to discourage

African countries from resuming diplomatic relations with Israel. According to these sources, Egypt also advised Spain recently that it has no objections to Madrid opening diplomatic relations with Israel. The Spanish government is in fact considering such a step in advance of Spain's formal entry into the European Economic Community (EEC) on January 1, 1986.

HUNDREDS OF ETHIOPIAN JEWS MARCH FROM ABSORPTION CENTERS TO BEN GURION AIRPORT TO PROTEST AGAINST CHIEF RABBINATE CONVERSION DEMAND

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 16 (JTA) -- Hundreds of Ethiopian Jewish immigrants -- men, women and children -- marched from absorption centers in Galilee and from others in southern Israel today to the Ben Gurion Airport to protest the demand by the Chief Rabbinate that they undergo ritual immersion, a religious conversion rite.

The Ethiopians, themselves devoutly religious, consider this demeaning and an insulting implication that they are not authentic Jews. Today's march, the first in a series of planned organized protests, was triggered by the refusal of local rabbinical authorities to issue marriage certificates to several young couples who have not undergone immersion. Earlier this week, Ethiopian immigrants at absorption centers refused to attend their Hebrew classes and some refused to report for work.

Marchers today, carrying their personal belongings, trekked toward Ben Gurion Airport, a symbolic destination they chose to demonstrate disenchantment over their treatment by the Orthodox religious establishment. Between last November and the early part of this year, more than 10,000 Ethiopian Jews were brought to Israel by secret airlift from Sudan. The airlift was suspended in January because of premature disclosure.

Marchers Collapse At Roadsides

The marchers were thus symbolizing the severe hardships they had to endure in their long trek by foot through famine-stricken Ethiopia to reach the planes in Khartoum. Today, many of them collapsed at the roadsides from heat and want of food and water. They were given relief by other Israelis.

At Migdal Haemek, the marchers from absorption centers in Galilee were met by Jewish Agency officials and the local rabbi, David Grossman. They were persuaded to return, by bus, to the centers on the promise that Premier Shimon Peres would meet with their representatives and would bring their grievances before the Chief Rabbinate.

But about 150 of the protestors managed to reach Ben Gurion Airport where they staged a sit-in at the passenger terminal. Others marched from the absorption center at Kiryat Gat to the local offices of the rabbinate to protest.

Four Motions On The Knesset Agenda

Four motions were placed on the Knesset agenda today dealing with the question of conversion for Ethiopian Jews. The Chief Rabbinate, which claims it recognizes them as Jews, originally insisted that all males undergo symbolic circumcision by drawing blood. They dropped that demand but are adamant on the ritual bath.

Israel's former Sephardic Chief Rabbi, Ovadia Yosef, has ruled the ritual unnecessary because the Ethiopians are, for all intents and purposes, Jewish. But his successor, Mordechai Eliahu, and the incumbent Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi, Avraham Shapiro, maintain

that the conversion ritual is required because violations of halacha may have occurred in the families of the immigrants sometime in the past.

The rabbinate refuses to grant them marriage certificates without immersion because of the possibility that their ancestor's may have married non-Jews. The identity cards issued to many of the immigrants do not state Jewish nationality. Instead, they are stamped "unregistered."

One Ethiopian youth who was supposed to report for induction into the army last Sunday, refused to show up until after today's protest march. "I don't know what 'unregistered' means," he told reporters.

CABINET AGREES TO INCREASE ALLOWANCES OF LARGE FAMILIES

JERUSALEM, July 16 (JTA) -- The Cabinet has reversed itself and agreed to increase the allowances granted families of four or more children, including Arab families. Premier Shimon Peres promised, moreover, that the poorest 20 percent of the population will receive full compensation for cost-of-living increases.

The Cabinet had originally decided to raise child allowances by 11 percent, but only for families with a member who served in the armed forces. This excluded the vast majority of Arab families inasmuch as Arabs are barred from serving in the Israel Defense Force.

Cabinet sources said that decision would have meant double discrimination against Arab families because they do not receive the supplementary payments from the National Insurance Institute made automatically to persons leaving the armed forces on completion of military service.

CRIME DOESN'T PAY AS MUCH ANY MORE

TEL AVIV, July 16 (JTA) -- Whether or not crime pays, the government is entitled to its lawful share of the criminal's ill-gotten gains, a Tel Aviv magistrate ruled yesterday. Judge Yitzhak Braas fined Yoel Kochavi the equivalent of \$40 and imposed a two-month suspended sentence for failure to file income tax returns for the years 1980-82. Kochavi admitted his income was derived from burglary and robbery.

He said he did not file a return because of a "work accident." Kochavi fell from a first-floor apartment he was attempting to break into and served time in jail for that offense.

Braas ruled that taxes must be paid even on illegal income. Otherwise, he said, robbers, burglars, pimps and procurers could justify tax evasion on grounds that their earnings were outside the law. He imposed a light sentence on Kochavi who swore he was abandoning his life of crime and intended to open a repair business.

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DENVER (JTA) -- The house that was the home of Golda Meir here in 1913 was defaced over the weekend. Swastikas were painted on the house after it was moved by truck to a site where it is to be restored as a community center and a museum. Police are investigating the incident.

**MACCABIAH GAMES GET UNDER WAY;
EMOTION, PRIDE MARK THE OPENING**
By Paul Lungen and David Pierson

TEL AVIV, July 16 (JTA) — The 12th Maccabiah Games got under way here yesterday with opening ceremonies marked by emotion, pride and colorful spectacle.

Outstanding Jewish athlete Mark Spitz of the United States kindled the Maccabiah flame following a yizkor (memorial) service for Jewish dead in one of the more emotional moments in the three-hour program.

The seven-times Olympic gold medal winner in swimming, accompanied by Shirley Shapira, Anouk Spitzer and Shlomit Romano, 13-year old daughters of Israeli athletes murdered by terrorists at the 1972 Munich Olympics, was mobbed by many of the athletes already assembled on the grass playing field at Ramat Gan Stadium.

The crowd cheered enthusiastically as Spitz ignited the Maccabiah flame in the darkened stadium. Earlier, 4,000 athletes representing 38 countries marched into the jampacked stadium, with 50,000 spectators greeting the athletes with warm applause.

Canadian flagbearer Mark Berger, a bronze medal winner at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics in judo, led the 190-strong Canadian contingent in the colorful parade of Maccabiah representatives.

Marching in the front row of the group were Rabbi Gunther Plaut, Alex Fisher and Jean Beliveau, honorary chefs de mission, followed by the athletes, coaches, medical crew and executive of the Canadian Maccabiah team.

Something To Smile About

Beliveau's broad smile was unmistakable even from 30 meters away. Earlier, the former Montreal Canadiens star center told reporters, "I was at the 1972 and 1976 Olympic Games and I didn't walk in the opening ceremonies, so I'm really looking forward to walking with Canada's athletes."

Beliveau had good reason to smile, as the atmosphere among the athletes was one of camaraderie and brotherhood, and the show was nothing short of spectacular.

The Brazilians captured the hearts of the spectators as the exuberant South Americans danced their way into the stadium, led by women in Brazilian native dress moving to the sound of the samba beat. Cheerleaders sporting pompoms led the 500-strong American squad, while the British entered in good order.

If medals were given out on opening night, the 90 Italians would have walked away with the gold as most nattily attired team, for their white suits and navy blue slacks and ties.

The 300-strong Australian team entered wearing their familiar bush hats, while the two-man team from Bermuda wore — you guessed it — Bermuda shorts.

The Maccabi Modi'in delegation, consisting of newcomers to Israel plus South Africans, Rumanians and a Lebanese, wore dark blue shirts and khaki pants. The Canadians were sharp in their white blazers, red slacks or skirts, topped off by red cowboy hats.

Israeli Team Gets Warmest Applause

Israel's 800-person team, dressed in the blue and white of the Israeli flag, received the warmest applause, but the spectators saved a little something ex-

tra and clapped rhythmically as a group of seven marched behind a banner that read "Let my people go," a reference to the Jews who are not free to be in Israel.

Among the spectators present were Israeli President Chaim Herzog, Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Knesset members, diplomats, World Maccabi Union president Fred Worms, and many notables from the international sporting world.

After Herzog, himself a past Maccabi boxer from Ireland, declared the games open, thousands of children presented a play, Tribes of Israel, told in song and dance, followed by five parachutists who dropped thousands of feet to make pin-point landings in the center of the stadium.

A spectacular fireworks display ended the wondrous evening, after which the athletes and fans, faces beaming with pride, crowded out of the stadium looking forward to the start of 10 days of sporting competition.

SOME 2,000 EDUCATORS FROM THIS COUNTRY AND ABROAD EXPECTED TO ATTEND 10TH ANNUAL CAJE CONCLAVE

By Marlene Goldman

NEW YORK, July 16 (JTA) — Almost 2,000 Jewish educators, representing nearly every state in this country and several nations abroad, will attend the Tenth Annual Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education, to be held August 11-15 at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Ill.

The Conference, sponsored by the Coalition for Alternatives in Jewish Education (CAJE) and co-sponsored by the Board of Jewish Education of Metropolitan Chicago, "is both a demonstration and a celebration of Jewish teaching," said Dr. Eliot Spack, CAJE's National Director.

"It is a unique event," he continued, "because it brings together people from every part of the Jewish ideological spectrum — Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist, Reform. It welcomes all ages, from teens to seniors, and it is geared to meet the needs and interests of people with varying degrees of commitment and scholarship from the once-a-week Bible teacher to the full-time rabbi, professor, or administrator."

During the five-day meeting, which was organized with the help of the Associated Talmud Torahs of Chicago, and assisted by a grant from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, 360 presenters, most of them CAJE members, will offer more than 450 social, religious, and historical related sessions, addressing topics such as feminism, halacha, and Jewish literature.

Conference Cited As A Milestone

"This particular conference, CAJE 10, is a milestone because we are marking a decade of growth, stimulation, and service to Jewish educators," noted Dr. Betsy Katz, chairperson of this year's CAJE Conference, and director of services to Reform Congregations for the Chicago Board of Jewish Education. "But we are looking to the future, and we are stressing the realities of contemporary life as they affect Jewish education," she added.

"In addition to focusing on things that Jews have always studied, we will deal with such problems as the changing classroom, changing families, changing technologies, and changing composition of Jewish communities."

Aside from the sessions and several pre-Conference workshops, there will be a wide-variety of exhibits and how-to demonstrations for browsing or buying or hands-on learning.