

**ISRAEL REACTING CAUTIOUSLY TO
REPORTS THAT THE USSR MAY PERMIT
SOME 12,000 JEWS TO EMIGRATE
OVER THE NEXT 9-12 MONTHS**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 31 (JTA) -- Israeli officials and Kremlin-watchers reacted cautiously to reports that the Soviet Union may be prepared to permit the emigration of some 12,000 Jews over the next 9-12 months and that they will be able to fly from Moscow to Tel Aviv, via Rumania, bypassing the traditional transit point in Vienna.

Sources at the Prime Minister's Office insisted Tuesday that nothing had been finalized and observed that the number of visas allegedly promised by the Soviet authorities was tiny compared to the 400,000 Jews who are reported to be seeking emigration.

At the Foreign Ministry, however, officials stressed that every Jew allowed to leave the Soviet Union is an achievement. While hopeful that changes in emigration policy may be on the way, the officials cautioned that the reports which surfaced in New York Sunday and Monday have not been confirmed.

President Chaim Herzog, who was to leave Tuesday on an official visit to Switzerland and West Germany, was optimistic. He said reports from Moscow, together with other indications, pointed to a real change in Soviet attitude for which Israel should be prepared.

A spokesman for Premier Yitzhak Shamir flatly rejected suggestions of a connection between Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's apparent new policies and Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres' support for an international conference on Middle East peace in which the Soviet Union would participate. "Definitely not," the spokesman said, adding that the Premier remains unalterably opposed to an international conference.

Main Achievements Of The Talks

The Foreign Ministry said the main achievement of talks held in Moscow between Western Jewish leaders and ranking Soviet officials was the institution of flights to Israel via Rumania. Rabbi Arthur Schneider, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, told the Jewish Telegraphic in New York Monday that he had negotiated the new procedure last month in Moscow and Bucharest.

The Foreign Ministry cited talks held in Moscow last week by Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, and Morris Abram chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

Abram told the JTA Sunday that they had a "candid discussion on the subject of Soviet Jews in all of its aspects" with Soviet officials and were optimistic. He added that "events of the next few months will tell whether the optimistic mood in which we returned is justified."

According to Schneider, the flight via Rumania will bring Soviet Jews to Israel in greater numbers. They will not be able to obtain U.S. visas as they have done in Vienna until now. An

estimated 80 percent of Jews leaving the USSR via Vienna have opted to go to the U.S. rather than Israel although they carry Israeli visas.

Ready To Deal With Newcomers

Some officials here expressed concern over how Israel's strained economy will be able to absorb large numbers of Jews arriving from the Soviet Union. But Absorption Minister Yaacov Tsur sees no problem. He said his Ministry was "ready, willing and able" to deal with up to 50,000 newcomers a year. "Let them come, we won't regret it," Tsur said.

He added: "We are very happy to hear about changes of the policy of Russia toward the Jewish question and about Jewish life in Russia. Our main hope now is to bring about the release of Prisoners of Zion from their prisons and to prepare ourselves for the possibility of their absorption here in Israel."

Various groups here active on behalf of Soviet Jews, which keep close tabs on events in Moscow, adopted a wait-and-see attitude to the reports of a more liberal emigration policy. Some suggested that Gorbachev might be moving too fast for his more conservative Kremlin colleagues and that "his days could be numbered."

Israel Radio reporters who telephoned Moscow to confirm the reports were told by Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Genadi Gerasimov that he had "no details."

Jewish Agency officials said that even though the reports are yet to be verified, they have begun preparations to receive large numbers of Soviet Jews here within a matter of weeks.

**SOVIET JEWRY ACTIVISTS IN U.S.
EXPRESS RESERVATIONS ABOUT REPORT
FROM USSR ON SOVIET JEWRY STATUS**
By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, March 31 (JTA) -- Soviet Jewry activists in the United States expressed reservations Tuesday that a report that the Soviet Union has agreed to an increase in Jewish emigration by way of Rumania and for easing of restrictions on Jewish religion and culture.

Lynn Singer, executive director of the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry, said that she is "deeply concerned" over the figure of 11-12,000 exit visas the Soviet Union is reportedly willing to give Soviet Jews this year. "This is only the very tip of the iceberg," she asserted, claiming that "we know of some 400,000 Soviet Jews who have already taken the first steps in applications for a visa."

"What is the future for them?" she asked. "What will happen to those who are refused exit visas on the ground that they hold state secrets? The headlines in the newspapers shout that Soviet Jews will be free, but many cannot get exit visas. And what will happen next year, after the 11,000 Soviet Jews emigrate, how many will be permitted to leave later? This is the question."

Singer charged that the new transit procedure for Soviet Jews of direct flights to Israel through Rumania is in violation of the Helsinki Accords. She argued that future Jewish emigrants from the Soviet Union will no longer be able to

claim refugee status once they arrive in Rumania -- as they have been doing for years once they arrived in Vienna from the Soviet Union. "This is in clear violation of the Helsinki Accords," which give refugees the right to settle in the country of their choice, she said.

Statements By Three Who Were In Moscow

Morris Abram, president of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, who have just returned from Moscow where they met with top Soviet officials, issued a statement here late Monday night announcing that the Kremlin has agreed to a meaningful increase in Jewish emigration in the following months.

In addition, Abram and Bronfman said, they negotiated with the Soviet authorities a new transit procedure for future Jewish emigrants who will reach Israel through direct flights from Rumania, an arrangements that would eliminate the phenomenon of noshrim (dropouts) -- Jews who leave the Soviet Union with an Israeli visa, but when they arrive in Vienna choose to go elsewhere, mainly the United States. Abram and Bronfman also said the Soviets agreed to ease restrictions on the study of Hebrew and on religious Jewish life.

Elan Steinberg, executive director of the WJCongress, who participated in the meetings Bronfman and Abram held in Moscow, told the JTA Tuesday that the Soviet officials agreed that all Jewish religious books from any sources will be permitted to enter and be distributed to Jews in the Soviet Union.

"The Soviets asked the WJC to draw a list of all religious books they want to send into the Soviet Union and submit it to them. They did not place any limits on the quantity of the books. They only objected to books of a political nature," Steinberg said. He said the Soviets also agreed to the opening of new synagogues in Jewish communities across the country and even agreed that rabbinical training will be given in Moscow and that rabbinical students from the Soviet Union will come to study in the United States.

'Deal' Is Sharply Criticized

Rabbi Avraham Weiss, national director of the Center for Russian Jewry/Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, sharply criticized the "deal" between the Soviet authorities and the Jewish leaders. "Abram and Bronfman are stabbing Soviet Jewry in the back," Weiss charged.

"The slight increase of immigration this month -- which is 12 percent of what it was per month in 1979, when 51,000 Jews were allowed to emigrate from the USSR -- is a ploy, an attempt to change the Jackson-Vanik Amendment. Once this occurs," Weiss warned, "emigration can be brought to a virtual standstill."

Weiss was referring to Abram's announcement that he told Soviet officials that if Jewish emigration increased meaningfully, American Jewish leaders would support abolition of the Jackson-Vanik amendment which links trade with the Soviet Union with emigration of Soviet Jews and others.

Responding to claims that the Soviets will allow the study of Hebrew in the USSR, bringing in Hebrew books from abroad, the establishment of a kosher restaurant in Moscow and the ordina-

tion of rabbis, perhaps in the U.S., Weiss said, simply, "The Soviets have made many promises in the past that they've never fulfilled."

'Wait And See' Policy

Alan Pesky, chairman of the Coalition to Free Soviet Jews, said that his organization has decided to adopt a policy of "wait and see" in regard to the reports of increased Soviet Jewish emigration.

"We are not prepared to give away the store until words are translated into deeds. Nor are we about to leap for joy because of Soviet promises," Pesky said.

"There have been too many instances where promises made by the Soviets on this issue were not fulfilled. We must deal in reality not in fantasy and the reality is that hundreds of thousands of Jews who want to emigrate are still waiting to do so." Meanwhile, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry announced Tuesday that 470 Jews were given permission to leave the Soviet Union in March.

U.S. VIEW ON SOVIET JEWRY DEVELOPMENT By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 31 (JTA) --The Reagan Administration had no comment Tuesday about a reported agreement by Soviet officials to allow Jewish emigrants to fly directly to Israel through Rumania.

But Department deputy spokesperson Phyllis Oakley made clear that the United States was against any policy forcing Soviet Jewish emigrants to go to Israel. "It is long-standing United States policy that Soviet Jews should be able to immigrate to the country of their choice," Oakley said. "That remains our position."

The Administration rejected a request from Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir, during his recent visit to Washington, that Soviet Jewish emigrants not be given refugee status which allows them to immigrate to the U.S.

Soviet Jews, all carrying visas to Israel, now emigrate from the USSR through Austria, where the majority decide to go to the U.S. and other countries rather than Israel.

Morris Abram, chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, during a visit to Moscow last weekend reportedly were told that the Soviets would permit the direct flights to Israel via Rumania.

Oakley did not comment on assurances the two Jewish leaders received for increased Jewish emigration.

"We've noticed that on several occasions during the past few months, both in public and in private, Soviet officials have said that the emigration level would rise in 1987," she said. "By the end of March approximately 700 Jews will have arrived in the West this year. This is a good beginning, but there is still a long way to go. All who wish to leave the Soviet Union should be permitted to do so."

LAVI SECOND PROTOTYPE HAS SUCCESSFUL FIRST TEST FLIGHT By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 31 (JTA) -- Prototype No. 2 of the Lavi, Israel's second generation jet

fighter-bomber, had its first test flight Tuesday. The manufacturer, Israel Aviation Industries (IAI), expressed satisfaction with the results but gave no indication of how the second prototype differs from the first model, which has undergone 23 test flights over the past two months.

Unlike previous Lavi flights, flown by IAI's chief test pilot, Menachem Shmul, the pilot Tuesday was an Israel Air Force combat veteran whose name was not disclosed. He put the second prototype through easy paces, cruising over central Israel at subsonic speeds of 150-350 mph. at an altitude of no more than 20,000 feet.

The Lavi development program calls for 1,800 test flights of five prototype models over the next three years. But the program is in deep trouble regarding costs. The U.S. Defense Department has urged Israel to abandon the Lavi because of estimated high costs in favor of an American-built plane such as the advanced F-16C. Many in the Israeli defense establishment agree.

IAI, meanwhile, is not relying on military orders. Its American representatives, Atlantic Aviation, announced Monday the sale of four more of its Westwind executive jets in the U.S. So far 250 Westwinds have been sold in North America.

SOME 80,000 UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ON STRIKE TO PROTEST GOVERNMENT PLANS TO RAISE TUITION FEES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 31 (JTA) -- About 80,000 university students went on strike Tuesday to protest government plans to raise tuition fees. Several thousand massed outside the Prime Minister's Office Tuesday evening in what began as a peaceful demonstration and ended in a violent clash with police.

The students said they are prepared to pay the equivalent of \$800 a year. Education Minister Yitzhak Navon has proposed tuition slightly in excess of that amount. But the Finance Ministry insists that students will have to pay up to \$2,000 a year because the Treasury can no longer cover the costs of higher education at a lesser fee. University authorities warned that if the strike continues beyond April 10, when classes recess for the Passover holidays, the rest of the spring semester may have to be cancelled. Nevertheless, students at teacher training colleges announced they would join the strike Wednesday.

Thousands of students gathered outside the Knesset late Tuesday and began a torchlight procession to the Prime Minister's Office. They were blocked by police who became the targets of flaming torches and rocks. Two students were arrested. One was identified as Uri Ben-Hur, chairman of the Jerusalem Students Association.

CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER SEES A 'BRIGHT FUTURE' FOR BLACKS AND JEWS WORKING TOGETHER IN AMERICA

ATLANTA, March 31 (JTA) -- Coretta Scott King, widow of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., told a gathering of Conservative rabbis and Black leaders here Monday night that she saw "a bright future for Blacks working with Jews in America, despite what tensions might arise from time to time."

The gathering at Ebenezer Baptist Church, part of the 87th annual convention of the Rabbinical Assembly, also heard calls for a revival of the Black-Jewish coalition which battled for civil

rights under the leadership of Dr. King more than 20 years ago.

Coretta Scott King acknowledged differences which have arisen since then between Jews and Blacks. "We disagree on affirmative action and Israel's policy toward South Africa," she said. She added, however, that Israel's recent decision to halt arms shipments to South Africa was a "step in the right direction."

"I will always champion the right for Israel to exist and live in peace. I see Israel as a great outpost for democracy," Mrs. King said. "We can agree to disagree by talking together and understanding each other's position . . . Even on the question of affirmative action, our goals are employment opportunities and ample education for all Americans," she said.

Proposes A New 'Coalition Of Conscience'

Rabbi Jordan Ofsefer, of Dallas, who shared the platform with King and with Mayor Andrew Young of Atlanta, called for a new "Coalition of Conscience" in which Blacks and Jews would join together to fight such major concerns of the day as drug abuse, alcoholism, teen-age pregnancy, AIDS, poverty and homelessness.

"Let us carry on the dream of Dr. King so that we Jews who brought our brethren, Black Jews out of privation and suffering in Ethiopia, to freedom and dignity in Israel, will join hands with all of Black America so that together in a new alliance we can address the agenda confronting our modern society," Ofsefer said.

He proposed the initiation of a bilateral coalition between the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, founded by Dr. King, and the Rabbinical Assembly as a first step. He urged that the rebuilding and restoration of the Black-Jewish coalition should move forward by developing a mutual agreement on agenda priorities, establishing working groups dealing with specific problems, and reaching out to other Black and Jewish organizations both nationally and locally.

A resolution introduced at the Rabbinical Assembly convention proposes the immediate initiation of a grassroots activist outreach program between the Conservative synagogues and their members in the U.S. and Canada and Black churches. The proposed program includes guest exchanges between pulpit rabbis and ministers of Black churches, exchange visits between churches and synagogues for youths and adults, Black-Jewish model seditors emphasizing themes of freedom, pluralism, anti-discrimination and concerned action against prejudice, and work in coalitions whenever possible for shared legislation.

In a demonstration of cooperation on common issues, King and other Black leaders joined with rabbis in an indoor rally on behalf of Soviet Jews. Afterward, the overflow crowd at the Ebenezer Baptist Church sang "We Shall Overcome" in Hebrew and about 100 rabbis held a brief memorial service at Dr. King's gravesite.

The Rabbinical Assembly, which represents 850 synagogues and 1.5 million members in the U.S. and Canada, is holding its convention through Thursday at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

WASHINGTON (JTA) -- The United States has responded to Col. Aviem Sella's resignation as commander of the Tel Nof air base by lifting its restrictions against the base, the State Department announced Monday.

**SPECIAL TO THE JTA
BRAZILIAN CATHOLIC LEADER IS ON
ECUMENICAL PILGRIMAGE IN ISRAEL**
By Rochelle Sidel

SAO PAULO, March 31 (JTA) -- Bishop Dom Ivo Lorscheiter, president of the National Bishops Conference of Brazil, is this week spending three days in Israel on an ecumenical pilgrimage, accompanied by Rabbi Henry Sobel of Congregacao Israelita Paulista in Sao Paulo, the largest synagogue in Latin America.

The highest Brazilian Catholic Church official to visit Israel's holy places on an ecumenical trip, Lorscheiter is the guest of the Jewish community of Brazil. The trip is a token of gratitude for the bishop's extraordinary personal support for Catholic-Jewish relations in Brazil, Sobel told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Lorscheiter will visit the holy places of Christianity and Judaism, but will not be meeting with official representatives of the Israeli government, Sobel said. "With regard to international policy, the National Bishops' Conference of Brazil is subject to the authority of the Holy See, and the Vatican does not recognize the State of Israel," Sobel explained.

'Tremendous Sensitivity' By Brazilian Bishops

"The Brazilian bishops have already acknowledged the reality of the State of Israel, which is the most they can do," Sobel said. "The Bishops' Conference does not have the power to recognize or not recognize a nation. Such recognition can only come from the Vatican."

But, Sobel added, "The Brazilian bishops showed tremendous sensitivity by including in their guidelines 'the right of Jews to a peaceful political existence in their land or origin, a right that becomes real in the State of Israel.' And the mere fact that the president of the Bishops' Conference wants to go to Israel speaks for itself."

The "guidelines" to which Sobel referred is a 187-page "Guide for Catholic-Jewish Dialogue in Brazil," distributed in the fall of 1986 to Brazil's 229 Catholic archdioceses and dioceses. The guide covers such subjects as Israel, Jewish history, the Holocaust, roots of anti-Semitism, Judaism in Brazil, and interfaith cooperation.

"I personally feel that the ecumenical cause is valid independent of the recognition of the State of Israel by the Vatican, important as that may be," Sobel told the JTA. "Recognition of the State of Israel by the Vatican is a top priority for Jews all over the world, and we will strive relentlessly toward this goal. The issue of Israel is at the very center of Catholic-Jewish understanding."

"However, even if the Vatican does not recognize Israel in the immediate future, Catholic-Jewish dialogue must continue. Recognition will be a consequence of dialogue; it cannot be a prerequisite. If we make it a sine qua non condition, we will be creating an impasse to further progress in Catholic-Jewish relations. Our impatience with the Vatican's position on Israel cannot lead us to intransigence with regard to interfaith dialogue and action."

A More Important Step

For the Jews living in Brazil, "the support given by the Brazilian Catholic leadership to our community and to Israel is even more important than is recognition of Israel by the Vatican,"

Sobel continued. "In Brazil, where Jews are such a small minority, the National Bishops' Conference is reaching out to us with open arms and hearts. We cannot belittle their concrete manifestation of solidarity."

There are only about 150,000 Jews in Brazil, with the largest community of some 70,000 in Sao Paulo. Brazil is the largest Catholic country in the world, with Catholics comprising 90 percent of its population of 140 million.

"Under such circumstances, the good will of the Brazilian bishops toward the Jewish community takes on an even greater meaning," Sobel said. "They certainly don't need us. We need them. Israel does not depend on relations with the Vatican, in order to exist. But the way in which hundreds of millions of Brazilian Catholics are taught to think about Jews now and in the future will be critical to the future of our Jewish children."

BENJAMIN HORNSTEIN DEAD AT 95

PALM BEACH, March 31 (JTA) -- Benjamin Hornstein, a long-time fellow of Brandeis University and founder of the university's Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service, has died at age 95.

Hornstein's many civic and philanthropic activities have "left behind an extensive legacy of Jewish educational and welfare services and an extensive legacy of friends who loved and respected him," said Bernard Reisman, professor of American Jewish communal studies at Brandeis, who delivered a eulogy at Hornstein's funeral service in New York March 23.

Reisman, director of the university's Hornstein program, which trains graduate level students for leadership positions in the Jewish community, said Hornstein's involvement with Brandeis was intense.

He was a frequent visitor with students in the program that bears his name. He was an overseer of the university's Lown School of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, and, from a hospital bed this past winter, he called Brandeis president Evelyn Handler to make a contribution at the university's Palm Beach fundraising luncheon. This was the first of the 24 annual fundraising luncheons that he had missed.

Many Touched By His Generosity

"His kindness and generosity touched many," Handler said. "Ben Hornstein financed programs that provide opportunity and hope for countless people whose future would be immeasurably less, were it not for him."

Hornstein, who retired in 1960 as president of Charles Stores Company, Inc., was born and raised in New York City and lived in recent years in Palm Beach, where he funded a Jewish day school that bears his name.

He was a founder and overseer of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and a founder of the United Jewish Appeal of New York. His many other civic and philanthropic associations included the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York University, the American Jewish Committee and the Lexington School for the deaf in New York.

Hornstein's last visit to Brandeis was this past fall, when he received the honorary degree of doctor of humane letters on Founders' Day in recognition of his service to others.