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## U.S. CONFIRMS IT PLANS TO PROCESS ALL SOVIET REFUGEES IN MOSCOW

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- The Bush administration plans to shift its processing of Soviet refugees from Rome to Moscow "to the maximum extent possible," a State Department official told Congress on Wednesday.

Princeton Lyman, director of the department's Bureau for Refugee Programs, made the comment at a House Judiciary subcommittee hearing devoted to the administration's proposed worldwide refugee budget for the 1990 fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1.

Lyman's statement is the clearest official word to date that the administration intends to phase out its facility in Rome for processing Soviet Jews and other refugees who want to immigrate to the United States.

For the last decade, Rome has served as the transit point for Jews who leave the Soviet Union with Israeli visas and decide instead to seek entry to the United States.

Soviet refugees spend weeks in Rome, at U.S. government expense, until their refugee status applications are adjudicated.

### Concern About Confidentiality

The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the principal Jewish group assisting Soviet Jews who want to come to the United States, is expected to tell the House subcommittee Thursday that it would oppose complete closure of the Rome refugee center.

But HIAS is expected to propose transferring most of the U.S. government operations from Rome to Moscow, with the main exception being U.S. officials who adjudicate the refugee status applications.

HIAS estimates that the U.S. government would save \$18 million by transferring most of its operations to Moscow, where Soviet applicants for refugee status can continue to live at home, instead of at U.S.-subsidized transit centers in Rome operated by HIAS and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

The HIAS proposal would still mean that applicants for refugee status would have to be flown to Rome and spend a few weeks there while U.S. officials adjudicate their applications.

HIAS does not have an office in Moscow, where it fears it could not be guaranteed the confidentiality necessary to advise Jewish applicants for refugee status.

Also, it would rather see refugee status applications adjudicated in Rome, because the refusal rate there has been 20 percent in the past year, versus 46 percent for those Jews now applying for refugee status in Moscow.

But while U.S. officials currently refuse refugee status to those Soviet Jews who do not demonstrate "a well-founded fear of persecution," Congress may approve legislation this fall granting refugee status automatically to all Soviet Jews.

Refugee status allows potential immigrants to be admitted to the United States on an emergency basis and entitles them to government funds for transportation and initial resettlement costs.

Leaders of Jewish agencies involved in

assisting Soviet Jews to emigrate and resettle in the United States discussed the refugee situation Wednesday in New York with experts from the State Department, Justice Department and National Security Council.

They met with Priscilla Clapp, a member of the State Department's policy planning staff; Michael Lempres and Murray Dickman, top aides to Attorney General Dick Thornburgh; and Nancy Dyke, the NSC's director of international programs.

Jewish groups received the plan to shift processing from Rome to Moscow "with great interest and considerable support," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

### No Need For Rome Transit Point

Hoenlein said that among the Jewish groups, there was consensus that there is no longer "need for a transit point" in Rome.

Refugee processing in Moscow "does not require Soviet Jews to give up their jobs in advance," he said, adding that they would no longer be in "a state of limbo" while waiting to receive refugee status.

To iron out a new system for processing in Moscow, the administration is setting up a working group with non-government agencies, Hoenlein said.

He said U.S. officials indicated the new policy may be implemented as early as Oct. 1.

But the U.S. officials assured the Jewish leaders that those Soviet applicants for refugee status already waiting in Rome, most of whom are Jews, would be "grandfathered" in as refugees, Hoenlein said.

The U.S. officials met first with the Monitoring and Accountability Committee of the United Jewish Appeal's "Passage to Freedom" campaign for Soviet Jewry, and later with the Conference of Presidents.

The committee includes representatives of the Council of Jewish Federations, HIAS, the Joint Distribution Committee, United Israel Appeal, UJA and various community federations.

### THREE JEWISH GROUPS FORM ENTITY TO IMPROVE TIES WITH CHRISTIANS

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Three national Jewish organizations have officially announced their decision to create a new entity to further understanding and communication between the Jewish community and international Christian bodies of all denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church.

The joint cooperative effort was announced here Wednesday by the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

The new group appears to be an alternative to the International Jewish Committee on Inter-religious Consultations, or IJCIC, the umbrella group that has been representing world Jewry to the Vatican.

Neither AJCongress or ADL is a member of IJCIC. AJCommittee, which did belong to the

umbrella group, decided last week to pull out, a move that left IJCIC without a chairman.

Rabbi A. James Rudin, AJCommittee's director of interreligious affairs, had been serving as IJCIC chairman. But on Monday night, the Synagogue Council of America, which serves as the umbrella group's American Secretariat, decided he should no longer represent IJCIC to the Vatican or any other body.

Rudin is now the first of the rotating chairman of the new group.

IJCIC's governing board will meet Thursday to appoint a temporary chairman, who will hold office until Jan. 1, when IJCIC rules require that the representative of B'nai B'rith International take over the rotating chairmanship.

AJCommittee's break with IJCIC and the formation of a new group with essentially the same purpose come at a time of severe strain in Jewish-Catholic relations over a number of issues, including the continuing presence of a Carmelite convent at the Auschwitz death camp in Poland.

#### Still Going To The Vatican

Rudin had been in the process of negotiating arrangements for a meeting to discuss these issues between top Vatican officials and an IJCIC delegation. He was scheduled to travel to Rome next week to complete the process.

Rudin said he will still to travel to the Vatican next week, as originally planned. But instead of speaking for IJCIC, he will represent a new configuration of Jewish agencies.

Rudin's visit to Rome will be the new group's first formal attempt to make contact with what Rudin terms "appropriate Vatican officials."

The status of IJCIC's request to meet with the Vatican remains unclear and will be a prime topic of discussion at Thursday's meeting of the group's governing board.

The Vatican meeting had been tentatively scheduled to take place by the end of the month. But with the current turmoil surrounding IJCIC, it appears that any such consultation will have to take place after the High Holy Days.

AJCommittee this week was urged to reconsider its decision to leave IJCIC by the group's other constituents, the Synagogue Council of America, the World Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith.

"It is not good for the Jewish community to present a sense of disunity or competition among various agencies," said Rabbi Henry Michelman, executive vice president of SCA.

Michelman emphasized that IJCIC will continue to operate in its existing structure, despite AJCommittee's withdrawal.

But the formal announcement by AJCommittee, AJCongress and ADL made clear that, whatever the reasons for the AJCommittee's withdrawal, there are no prospects for its return.

#### 'A State Of Deterioration'

Formation of the new body was announced by Silverman, Henry Siegman, executive director of AJCongress, and Abraham Foxman, national director of ADL.

The announcement said the three organizations have agreed to join in a cooperative effort to further understanding and communication between the Jewish community and international Christian bodies, including the Roman Catholic Church, and Protestant and Orthodox Christian bodies.

The statement released by the groups de-

scribed Catholic-Jewish relations as being in "a state of deterioration."

It said Jews and Catholics feel "their positions on several important issues have been treated with a lack of sensitivity by the other side."

"Each side, we believe, must address these felt grievances, if we are to preserve the important gains that have been achieved in Catholic-Jewish understanding," the statement said.

Those serving in the Secretariat of the new group will be Rudin, Rabbi Leon Klenicki of ADL and Dr. Michael Wyschogrod of AJCongress.

#### **ISRAELI TOURISM UP IN '89; HOTEL OWNERS SLASH RATES** By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Facing a roomful of leaders of American Jewish organizations last week, Gideon Patt, Israel's tourism minister, described his recent victory over Israeli hotel owners with relish.

Last month, Patt and the Hotel Owners Association signed an accord which slashes room rates between 10 percent and 25 percent. The agreement, which goes into effect Sept. 17, also covers the prices charged for restaurant and other services.

Although Patt, a member of Likud's Liberal Party wing, professes to oppose price controls, he finally determined that inflated hotel costs were taking Israel out of international competition for tourists and that steps had to be taken to bring down prices.

"If we want to be competitive, we have to deliver an attractive tourist package," Patt told more than 100 leaders of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, who gathered Sept. 6 at a meeting convened by the National Committee for Tourism to Israel.

Patt said that the hoteliers, having grown accustomed to low room occupancy rates of 60 percent to 65 percent, "covered their expenses by overcharging people."

Hotel owners, angered over being forced to lower prices, have blamed the Palestinian uprising for the failure to attract tourists.

While Patt admitted that tourists were concerned about the safety, he downplayed the intifada as playing a major role in the level of tourism to Israel.

"If the intifada is so important, was there less intifada in April of 1989 than in 1988? If the intifada is the reason, why did we have increases during that year?" he said.

Patt was referring to recent encouraging news regarding tourism to Israel. Speaking at a State of Israel Bonds North American Leadership Conference in Philadelphia last Friday, Patt reported that 970,000 tourists visited Israel in the first eight months of 1989, an increase of 12.5 percent over last year.

In the past two months, hotel occupancy in Israel has risen to 68 percent, compared to 60.6 percent the first six months of this year.

Some of the Jewish leaders at Patt's presentation before the Conference of Presidents last week were critical of his dismissal of the publicity problems generated by the intifada, saying that Patt should develop a systematic plan to deal with the issue instead of ignoring it.

(JTA Jerusalem Bureau Chief David Landau contributed to this report.)

# RABIN SAYS 10-POINT EGYPTIAN PLAN IS NOT ON ISRAEL'S NATIONAL AGENDA

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin poured cold water Wednesday on the 10-point paper offered by Egypt to advance Israel's peace initiative.

The Egyptian plan is not on Israel's national agenda, Rabin declared on Israel Radio. The only issue presently on the agenda is Israel's peace initiative, he said, echoing the position taken by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

"No one proposes to deviate from the government's peace initiative, neither have I heard a proposal to discuss the 10 points in any forum," the defense minister said.

He spoke after taking part in what was described as secret consultations Wednesday with Shamir and Foreign Minister Moshe Arens of the Likud bloc, as well as Rabin's Laborite colleague, Vice Premier Shimon Peres.

The four, who are Israel's top policymakers, are scheduled to meet again on Friday, before Peres departs for a visit to the United States.

They may have called the consultations to preserve Labor-Likud unity in the face of reports that the coalition partners are split over the Egyptian proposals and heading for a confrontation.

Peres, who heads the Labor Party and serves as finance minister, has spoken favorably of the Egyptian points. As recently as last Sunday he was quoted as saying they were close to Israel's own ideas.

But in a television interview Wednesday, Peres insisted that he and Rabin were of the same mind.

Rabin, for his part, played down importance of the Egyptian ideas, as well as indications that the Egyptian proposals have sparked interest in Washington.

"The 10-point plan was not offered to us by Egypt, and to the best of my knowledge neither did the United States approach us on the issue," Rabin said.

No one in the government has suggested that "some other policy" be substituted for the Israeli peace plan, he added.

According to Rabin, the one and only issue at this time is whether Israel will find negotiating partners among the Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Israeli peace initiative, first offered by Shamir on May 14, calls for Palestinian elections in the territories.

The voters would select representatives with whom Israel would negotiate on Palestinian self-rule and eventually the territories' future status.

Shamir has doggedly avoided discussing details of the plan, insisting that they would be the subject of negotiations.

The 10-point Egyptian proposal, on the other hand, is very specific about the conditions for the elections and says they should embrace the principle of "land for peace."

## SALE OF ISRAELI DURABLE GOODS IS DOWN

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- The sale of durable goods in Israel declined sharply during the first six months of the year, indicating that Israel's economic slowdown is continuing.

According to figures published Tuesday by

the Central Bureau of Statistics, automobile sales were down by 51 percent, compared to the same period of 1988.

The sale of television sets was off by 18 percent, washing machine sales dropped 8 percent and videotape recorders were down 25 percent.

Only air conditioner sales boomed, rising by 17 percent, as a result of abnormally hot weather.

According to the Central Bureau, 23,000 new cars were sold in the first half of the year, about 11,000 in the first quarter and 12,000 in the second.

Consumers bought 54,000 television sets, 38,500 washing machines and 20,000 videotape recorders.

## ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO LONDON PRESENTS CREDENTIALS IN DUBLIN

London Jewish Chronicle

DUBLIN, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Israel's new ambassador to Ireland, Yoav Biran, presented his credentials to President Patrick Hillery here Tuesday, mindful of the fact that the Irish Republic may play a crucial role in Middle East diplomacy in the coming year.

Israel has been handicapped by not having a resident ambassador in Ireland. Biran, who is also ambassador to Britain, works out of the Israeli Embassy in London.

Apart from Luxembourg, Ireland is the only member of the European Community whose Israeli ambassador has dual accreditation.

Israeli diplomats hope his visit here will improve chances that an embassy will soon be opened in Dublin.

Ireland will assume the six-month rotating chairmanship of the E.C. Council of Ministers on Jan. 1, which will put it in a position to guide E.C. policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Irish foreign minister is already one of the E.C.'s "troika" of ministers assigned to deal with that problem.

Irish policy has leaned heavily toward the Palestinians. The Republic has long advocated a Palestinian state.

The Palestine Liberation Organization maintains an office in Dublin, which has been behind anti-Israeli propaganda.

Biran also had talks with Irish politicians and attended the usual round of dinners and receptions, one of them given in his honor by the 2,000-strong Jewish community of Dublin.

## GERMAN NEO-NAZIS ENTER LOCAL RACES

By David Kantor

BONN, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- The extreme right-wing Republican Party, which many consider to be neo-Nazi, announced plans Sunday to run candidates in dozens of local elections next month in the federal state of Baden-Wurtemberg.

A party official, Peter Koehler, said in Stuttgart that the Republicans have put together an organization capable of effective campaigning in a wide range of communities.

The Munich-based party, which did surprisingly well in national balloting for the Parliament of Europe last spring, is headed by a former Waffen SS officer, Franz Schoenhuber.

It also gained seats in the West Berlin municipal legislature last winter, at the expense of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's ruling Christian Democratic Union and its coalition partner, the Free Democratic Party.

## LEON DULZIN, FORMER WZO CHAIRMAN AND ZIONIST LEADER, IS DEAD AT 76

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Leon (Arye) Dulzin, a former Cabinet minister whose career as a leader of the world Zionist movement spanned four decades, died Tuesday night at the age of 76.

Dulzin served as chairman of the World Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency Executive from 1978 to 1987, when Simcha Dinitz was elected to replace him.

He had been ill for some time and was receiving dialysis treatment for a kidney ailment.

Israel's Inner Cabinet observed a standing minute of silence in Dulzin's memory Wednesday morning. He was extolled by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

A leader of the Liberal Party wing of Likud, Dulzin was a member of Israel's first national unity government. He served as a minister without portfolio from 1967 to 1970 in the Cabinet of Prime Minister Golda Meir.

Deeply concerned with the problems of Diaspora Jewry, he traveled the world preaching aliyah and Jewish education, to counteract what he considered the danger to Jewish identity posed by intermarriage and assimilation.

A frequent visitor to the United States and Latin America, Dulzin spoke English and fluent Spanish, having lived in Mexico for 28 years before settling in Israel in 1956.

He was in the forefront of the Soviet Jewry aliyah movement and played a major role in Operation Moses, the secret airlift that brought some 10,000 persecuted Ethiopian Jews to Israel in the winter of 1984-85.

### 'Great Loss For Zionist Movement'

One of the first reactions to Dulzin's death came from his longtime colleague Moshe Nissim, a minister in the present unity government and head of Likud's Liberal Party faction.

He described Dulzin as "a great Zionist who implemented his Zionism. He saw Zionism not merely as an ideological movement, but as a practical recipe for living, which he fulfilled in his own life by his own aliyah."

In New York, Bernice Tannenbaum, chairwoman of the WZO-American Section, called Dulzin's death "a great loss for the Zionist movement, the Jewish people and the State of Israel."

"He was one of the first Zionist and Jewish leaders to alert us to the potential forces in Soviet Jewry, which led later to the great exodus of Soviet Jews to Israel," Tannenbaum said.

She announced that a memorial tribute to Dulzin will be held at WZO-American Section headquarters in Manhattan at 11 a.m. Friday.

Milton Shapiro, president of the Zionist Organization of America, and Paul Flacks, its executive director, said in a joint statement Wednesday that "the ZOA and the Zionist movement have lost an outstanding leader, whose eloquent voice, profound leadership and accomplishments have made a major impact on world Jewry."

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, declared that "Dulzin served world Jewry and the Zionist movement with distinction and honor during a long career of service to his people."

Dulzin was born in the Russian city of Minsk in 1913, and moved with his family to

Mexico in 1928. Ten years later, at the age of 25, he became president of the Zionist Federation of Mexico.

During the postwar decade, Dulzin attended World Zionist Congresses as a delegate, representing Jewry in Mexico and Central America.

At the 24th World Zionist Congress in 1960, Dulzin became the first Latin American to be elected to membership on the Jewish Agency Executive.

Dulzin was elected chairman of the WZO-Jewish Agency Executive in 1978, replacing the late Pinhas Sapir.

Funeral services are scheduled for Friday morning. The cortege will leave from the Jewish Agency headquarters, and he will be buried on Mount Herzl.

## SEVEN JEWISH GROUPS JOIN FORCES TO MOBILIZE FOR ABORTION RIGHTS

By Andrew Silow Carroll

WASHINGTON, Sept. 12 (JTA) -- Seven Jewish organizations are joining women's and civil rights groups in a mass effort to support the right to choose abortion.

The Mobilize for Women's Lives coalition, whose activities will include a rally in Washington on Nov. 12, was launched at a news conference here Sept. 7.

According to organizers of the coalition of more than 30 groups, the nationwide effort will attempt to counter the effects of the recent Supreme Court ruling in Webster vs. Reproductive Services.

That decision, allowing states more leeway in restricting access to abortions, is seen by pro-choice groups as an erosion of what they call a woman's constitutional right to choose an abortion and a green light for local legislatures to restrict abortion.

The coalition's efforts will focus on fund raising, voter registration drives and letter writing, with an eye toward electing pro-choice candidates in the 1990 congressional elections.

Jewish and other religious groups are prevented by their status as tax-exempt organizations from endorsing individual candidates in those elections.

Still, they believe "it is critically important for the public to understand that there are religious traditions that oppose restrictions on a woman's right to have an abortion," according to Robert Lifton, president of the American Jewish Congress.

"All too often, the only religious voices heard are those who oppose freedom of choice," Lifton said in a statement.

Not all Jewish organizations support abortion on demand. While Jewish law allows abortion in some cases, Orthodox groups, including Agudath Israel of America and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, still believe the government should set strict limits on its availability.

The Jewish groups so far taking part in the pro-choice coalition are the American Jewish Committee, AJCongress, B'nai B'rith Women, Hadassah, National Council of Jewish Women, National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

The National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods announced last week a "crisis campaign" to monitor state legislatures across the country and garner support for freedom of choice.