THORNBURGH SETS TERMS FOR WAIVING JACKSON-VANI K AMENDMENT SANCTIONS
By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24 (JTA) -- Attorney General Dick Thornburgh told Soviet officials in Moscow last week that he would urge President Bush to waive trade sanctions against the Soviet Union if it adopts emigration reforms in three areas.

Thornburgh met with Rudolf Kuznetsov, head of the Soviet OVRIR emigration agency, and received a copy of the latest draft legislation to ease Soviet emigration restrictions, Murray Dickman, an aide to the attorney general, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on Tuesday.

Dickman said Thornburgh told Kuznetsov that he would recommend a waiver of sanctions contained in the 1975 Jackson-Vanik Amendment if the Soviets enact legislation that would:
- End emigration refusals to those privy to "state secrets,"
- Prevent relatives of potential emigres from blocking their emigration; and
- Ease the requirement for a "letter of invitation" from relatives abroad.

Dickman said the Justice Department had not yet translated the draft legislation presented to Thornburgh. He also said Soviet officials initially would not give the attorney general a copy, on the ground that members of the Supreme Soviet had not yet seen it. The legislation is expected to be considered by the Soviet parliament as early as next week.

Dickman reported that as a result of Thornburgh's visit, Kuznetsov will likely have a "continuing relationship" with Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner-designate Gene McNary. In addition, he said a bilateral working group is being set up to address emigration issues.

The Jackson-Vanik Amendment denies most-favored-nation trade status and U.S. government aid to the Soviets and some other Communist countries.

Jewish Officials Tour Facilities

Accompanying Thornburgh on the first trip by a U.S. attorney general to the Soviet Union were three U.S. Jewish officials: Carmi Schwartz, executive vice president of the Council of Jewish Federations; Mark Talisman, its Washington representative; and Karl Zukerman, executive vice president of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

The Jewish officials did not sit in on any of Thornburgh's meetings with Kuznetsov or the agency's general counterparts at the Soviet Ministry of Justice. But they inspected the new refugee processing center being constructed at the U.S. Embassy and sat in on a refugee interview.

Thornburgh invited the Jewish delegation to Moscow to examine how the United States is implementing its recent decision to shift its processing of Soviet refugees from Rome to the Soviet capital.

The shift, which went into effect Oct. 1, means that any Soviet Jew now leaving the Soviet Union on an Israeli entry visa can no longer "drop out" in Vienna, travel to Rome and apply there for permission to enter the United States as a refugee.

The Jewish delegation did not get an answer to one of its primary concerns: whether there will be "capricious," denials of refugee status by U.S. officials in Moscow, as Schwartz put it.

But Dickman said that U.S. immigration officials are likely to deny refugee status to some of the Soviet Jews applying at the embassy in Moscow. He said U.S. refugee law prohibits the Immigration and Naturalization Service from granting refugee status to everyone who applies for it.

Phillip Saperia, assistant executive vice president of HIAS, agreed that there are "bound to be denials."

Refugee status, limited to foreigners demonstrating "a well-founded fear of persecution," entitles recipients to U.S. government funds for transportation and initial resettlement, as well as allowing them to seek U.S. citizenship.

Doctor Tells Of Anti-Semitism

Schwartz reported that there are currently six INS adjudicators at the Moscow embassy and that 20 additional adjudicators are expected to be sent there within a few months.

He described the personnel he met with as "extremely cooperative," but said the team of adjudicators expected to arrive "are going to need some very serious sensitivity training" on the situation for Jews in the Soviet Union.

Schwartz said he believes there is still anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, as claimed by a Soviet Jewish family in the refugee interview he sat in on at the embassy.

In the interview, a Soviet Jewish otolaryngologist claimed to have experienced "serious anti-Semitism on the job."

The doctor said that in February, a patient asked her if she was Jewish, "because you have a Jew face." The patient refused to be examined, because "Jewish doctors are known to kill their non-Jewish patients in the Soviet Union," the doctor told an INS official.

Her husband, also a doctor, said they "were confronted on subways and clinics with people swaying to imitate Jews at prayer," Schwartz said.

The interview was "conducted in a hallway with a 5-foot portable partition wall," he said, explaining that INS officials currently work in "very cramped facilities and quarters."

The Jewish officials also saw newly refurbished sections of the embassy, where new waiting spaces, interview rooms and consular offices are being built.

Lulav And Etrog Outside Embassy

Outside the embassy were lines of Soviets waiting to file refugee applications. The Jewish officials independently confirmed that 10 percent of those waiting were Jewish, by asking U.S. officials and two Lubavitcher rabbis.

The rabbis "walked up and down the line to engage (Jews) in blessing the etrog and lulav," Schwartz said, speaking of the ritual items used on the Sukkot festival.

The delegation also met with Israel's vice consul in Moscow, Yakov Kedmi. Kedmi, whose delegation arrived in the Soviet Union in July 1988, recently visited Birobijan, the area of
eastern Siberia the Soviets established in 1934 as a "Jewish autonomous region."

Kedmi reported that about 13,000 people there acknowledge they are Jewish and that an equivalent amount probably are, but do not say so. He said that Jews there asked for information about Israel, including videotapes and cassettes.

Schwartz called the apparent new communications system between Jews in the Soviet Union and Israel a "positive aspect of glasnost," the Soviet word for openness.

SIMCHAT TORAH ON ARKHIPPOVA STREET: JEWISH PRIDE AND DREAMS OF AMERICA

MOSCOW, Oct. 24 (JTA) -- On Simchat Torah, Jews owned Arkhipova Street outside Moscow on Simchat Torah to signal their defiance against religious repression. But now, in the era of glasnost and perestroika, they can assemble without fear of the KGB.

This year, the Soviet Jews gathered on Arkhipova Street focused their energies on emigration by seeking answers from the many American Jews who came to celebrate the holiday with them.

The Americans were everywhere. A B'nai B'rith group, led by novelist Leon Uris, fielded queries in one corner; activists from the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews were in another.

And in the midst of the crowd were the executive director of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and a small band of editors of American Jewish newspapers.

Improvised Soviet-Israel Economic Ties Expected to Develop From Peres Trip

TEL AVIV, Oct. 24 (JTA) -- Improved trade and economic ties are expected to develop between Israel and the Soviet Union as a consequence of Vice Premier Shimon Peres' forthcoming trip to the Soviet Union.

This is to include direct air routes between the two countries and establishment of ocean freight service that would bring the belongings of Soviet Jews to their new home in Israel.

Peres' policy adviser, Nimrod Novik, returned from Moscow Sunday after completing arrangements for the visit, which is scheduled for the first week in December.

He said the Soviets expect a "high profile" event and that Peres, who is Israel's finance minister, plans to focus on economic issues.

Novik said that during his stay in Moscow, agreement was reached in principle to establish an ocean freight service between Israeli and Soviet ports.

The cargo ships will carry the personal effects of Soviet Jewish immigrants expected to come to Israel in large numbers in the near future. But their main purpose will be to facilitate the exchange of goods between the two countries as commerce develops.

The shipping agreement followed closely on the agreement to establish regular air service between Moscow and Tel Aviv. It involves the two national air carriers, Aeroflot and El Al, which will operate both scheduled and charter flights.

This was a dream Israel long sought, to ensure that Jewish emigres who left the Soviet Union on Israeli visas went to Israel instead of a Western country.

The direct flights will also make it easier for the increasing number of Soviet Jewish tourists who are going to Israel for one- to three-month visits.

In New York, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry issued a statement last week welcoming the agreement on direct flights.

Shoshana Cardin, the conference's chairwoman, said the accord demonstrates that the Soviet authorities may now be prepared to acknowledge their responsibility to live up to international agreements regarding "the fundamental human right to leave one's country."
U.S. LUKEWARM ABOUT REPORTS SHAMIR ACCEPTS BAKER PROPOSALS IN PRINCIPLE
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24 (JTA) -- The State Department threw cold water Tuesday on optimistic reports from Israel that Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is close to accepting Secretary of State James Baker's five-point proposal leading to Israeli-Palestinian talks in Cairo.

Israeli news reports said Foreign Minister Moshe Arens had sent Baker a cable Monday night accepting the five-point proposal in principle, but proposing several major revisions. State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler confirmed Tuesday that Baker had received the cable. But she said it dealt with same issues that Baker and Arens have discussed on the telephone for the last two weeks.

The Israelis still have serious concerns or reservations that the United States is working with them to overcome, she said.

But at the Israeli Embassy here, spokeswoman Ruth Yaron countered that the Arens cable sent a "positive message" to the United States.

Arens expressed "Israel's readiness to accept in principle Baker's five points, with slight modifications that are needed in order to make sure Israeli concerns are met," Yaron said.

She said Israel has two major concerns. The first is "to make sure that Israel will not find itself negotiating" with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The second is to make sure that the Cairo talks will deal with Israel's proposal to have Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip elect representatives to participate in peace negotiations with Israel.

No 'Siege Situation'

Tutwiler said the United States believes that "the Israelis are working hard to advance the peace process. Without saying whether they have accepted or rejected Baker's five points, it is obvious they are seriously exploring a way to bridge the gap."

The United States is "continuing to work closely with Israel and Egypt to bring about a positive response to the five points," she added.

Tutwiler was reluctant to say that any progress had been made with the Arens cable. But her tone Tuesday was clearly more friendly to Israel than it was last week when she criticized statements by Shamir as "unhelpful."

In Israel, Shamir, who last week accused the Bush administration of trying to force Israel to talk with the PLO, denied Tuesday that there is "either a crisis or a siege situation" between Israel and the United States.

Instead, he told reporters accompanying him on a visit to military positions in the Golan Heights that the situation is now in a "clarification stage."

Shamir said Tuesday that when the "clarification stage" is completed, he will bring the issue before the Cabinet. Both hard-line ministers in Shamir's Likud bloc and leaders of the Labor Party, Likud's coalition partner, have complained that they have been excluded from the negotiations on Baker's five points.

Shamir also reiterated Tuesday that he hopes to meet with President Bush and Baker in Washington on Nov. 15, as planned. There have been indications he might cancel the trip if disagreements with Washington are not resolved by then.

Reports in Washington late last week and over the weekend indicated that Baker was growing impatient with the Israeli position and was on the verge of "washing his hands" of Israel's peace initiative.

Baker Less Pessimistic

But after the latest diplomatic exchange, the secretary of state appears to be a bit more hopeful. Responding to a question after his speech to the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco on Monday night, Baker repeated his assertion there is a "possibility" for success, but not a "probability."

Tutwiler said Tuesday that the secretary is "not overly pessimistic; he is not overly optimistic; he is very realistic."

She said that Arens' cable reinforced the U.S. position that Israel, the United States and Egypt are "working hard to bridge the gap" and meet the concerns of both Israel and Egypt.

Tutwiler indicated that Baker has not yet changed the wording of any of his five points, though he is open to changes. "Baker is not an unreasonable person," she said.

A State Department source indicated that Israel's concerns could possibly be met without changing Baker's five points through a "side letter." A similar approach was used in 1978 by President Jimmy Carter, who sent separate side letters to Israel and Egypt to assure different concerns they had about the Camp David accords.

(JTA correspondent Gil Sedan in Jerusalem contributed to this report.)

ISRAEL ADMITS, THOUGH EMBASSY DENIES, IT LOBBIED AGAINST DAY FOR ARMENIANS
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Oct. 24 (JTA) -- Foreign Ministry sources have admitted that "certain top officials" were "overzealous" in lobbying against a Senate resolution commemorating the "Turkish genocide of Armenians during World War I."

Ministry sources told The Jerusalem Post on Monday that they had been "astounded" to learn that the Israeli Embassy in Washington had been engaged in active lobbying against the resolution, in consultation with several American Jewish organizations.

The sources said that the embassy had been instructed only to "make inquiries" about the proposed Senate resolution, in response to a request by Turkey.

The measure in question would designate April 24, 1990, as a national day of remembrance of the "Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923."

The unnamed diplomats embroiled Jerusalem in an embarrassing affair, the sources said.

In Washington, however, the spokeswoman for the Israeli Embassy appeared to contradict these sources, saying that representatives of Israel "did not turn to any Jewish organizations with a request for action, and there was no direct Israeli activity in this matter."

The truth of it if it indeed took place, is viewed here as having been an attempt to appease Turkey, the only Moslem nation besides Egypt with diplomatic ties to Israel, at the expense of Armenian sensibilities.

In an attempt to soothe the feelings, the Foreign Ministry said that "Israel, as the state of the Jewish people, who suffered more persecution and oppression than any other people, is very sensitive to the suffering of the Armenian people."
Local members of B'nai B'rith and B'nai B'rith Women, in the throes of the organizations' annual drive for the homeless, are now donating clothing, sleeping bags and blankets to victims of the earthquake.

The San Francisco Jewish Community Center opened its doors to earthquake victims, providing them with hot showers and hot meals plus support groups to deal with emotional problems.

Congregation Shearith Israel, the historic synagogue which withstood the 1906 earthquake, had some new faces in its building this week.

The freshman and sophomore classes of neighboring St. Rose Academy resumed their studies in the synagogue, after their own building suffered extensive earthquake damage.

"Where Were You?"

"I think in times of crisis such as this, all of us, whatever religion or race, should be reaching out to one another. That's been the spirit of the Quake of '89," said Rabbi Martin Weiner, whose board OK'd the temporary housing arrangement with no hesitation.

All through the community, the simple question asked repeatedly since the earthquake has been: "Where were you?" The answers to that question ranged from the hair-raising to the amusing.

Luzie Ramsey, executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Greater East Bay, was heading eastbound on Interstate 580 toward Interstate 80 and the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, her regular route toward her Mill Valley home.

She heard a deafening noise and began to see chunks of concrete falling in front of her '80 Volkswagen Vanagon.

As the cement fell on cars around her, she began praying. "My prayer was 'God, either kill me or keep me alive, but please don't crush me in my car,'" Miraculously, she made it through.

Gary Greenbaum was standing in line in an upper deck concession stand at Candlestick Park before the start of the Bay Area World Series when the earth began rumbling.

He said an eerie silence fell over the crowd, which moments before had been joyous, cacophonous. "I was grateful when it ended," said the executive director of the Northern California Hillel Council. "What ran through my mind was that I couldn't believe this was how I was going to die."

On a lighter note, Israeli Consul General Harry Kney-Tal's biggest complaint was that he had gotten almost no sleep for four days after the quake.

Deluged With Calls

He was kept awake because his office was deluged with calls from anxious people in Israel, who wanted his office to connect them with relatives and friends living in the area temporarily, or on vacation here.

"The phone played up the destruction angle, and people in Israel believed that all of the Bay Area was destroyed," he said.

It was so draining that the consulate resorted to advertising to notify Israelis living in the Bay Area of the concern back home. The ad in the abbreviated Sunday Chronicle-Examiner read: "We kindly request that you make contact with your family and friends in Israel."

Added Kney-Tal in an interview: "Or we'll not get any sleep here."