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## FEDERATION LEADERS JOIN FORCES TO PAY FOR SOVIET RESETTLEMENT

By Allison Kaplan

MIAMI, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- Leaders of Jewish community federations from around the country made a historic commitment Tuesday to join together to fund the resettlement of Soviet Jews in the United States and Israel.

At a special general assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, representatives of 83 community federations overwhelmingly agreed to take on collectively one of the biggest fundraising challenges that American Jewry has ever faced.

"Few of us were lucky enough to be part of the triumph of creating the State of Israel in 1948, and fewer of us were around to try and save European Jewry. But now we have that opportunity," said Rabbi Brian Lurie, executive director of San Francisco's Jewish Community Federation.

Lurie's sentiments echoed those of many in the Miami conference hall who believe that the current wave of Soviet emigration represents a dual opportunity that comes once in a lifetime: the chance to rescue hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews and the ability to infuse the State of Israel with an educated and motivated population.

It was in this atmosphere that the assembly voted to approve four resolutions implementing the principle of federations paying their "fair share" of resettlement costs.

The concept will apply not only to the \$420 million goal of the United Jewish Appeal's new Operation Exodus campaign for the absorption of Soviet Jews in Israel, but also to the estimated \$40 million to \$50 million that it will cost to settle the 40,000 Soviet Jews expected to come to the United States in the next year.

### A Collective Enterprise

The decision to share the cost of domestic resettlement -- as opposed to leaving individual American communities heavily impacted by the emigration wave to fend for themselves -- was singled out for praise by CJF leadership.

For the first time, American Jewish communities have "finally accepted that they would help other communities pay some costs," said Miriam Schneirov, president of the Federation of Jewish Agencies of Greater Philadelphia and a CJF vice president.

Schneirov co-chaired a special CJF panel on resettlement that came up with the proposals adopted Tuesday.

It was a giant step for the federation movement as a collective enterprise, as community federations have traditionally acted independently in handling domestic needs.

But while the federation leaders unanimously agreed that at this time of crisis, they need to pull together, there was disagreement over what constitutes a community's "fair share."

There was considerable debate over one of the resolutions, which stated that each community's campaign achievement in 1988 would form the basis of its responsibility for Soviet Jewish resettlement.

Smaller federations that have raised relative-

ly large sums of money for communities of their size complained that basing the formula strictly on past performance would, in effect, punish their communities for successful fund-raising in the past.

Led by the federations from Minneapolis and Columbus, Ohio, these communities banded together and proposed an amendment stating that the formula for domestic resettlement be based 50 percent on the 1988 campaign results and 50 percent on a Jewish community's size relative to the national Jewish population.

This formula, they contended, would push federations that have not raised as much money to work harder, instead of putting an additional burden on communities that do well.

### Compromise On 'Fair Share' Formula

"If a person is giving two pints of blood and everybody else is giving one pint of blood, and you come to that good person and say, 'We want even more blood from you,' eventually you are going to drain the blood out of the person that is the good guy," said Herbert Goldenberg, president of the Minneapolis Federation for Jewish Service.

But a delegate from Detroit countered that "if we were the American Red Cross and if we were looking for donors, we would not set up sites where blood has not been given before."

"To change the formula on the basis of anything other than past performance would suggest at the outset that we might be setting ourselves up for failure," the federation leader said, adding with emotion, "And we must not fail!"

Eventually, a compromise was hammered out and the resolution amended so that the formula for a community's "fair share" would be based 85 percent on the 1988 campaign results and 15 percent on each community's population.

The negotiation of the compromise was a "fine exhibition of statesmanship," Martin Kraar, executive vice president of CJF, commented after the proceedings.

"The smaller communities walked away feeling as much a part of this process as the New Yorkers," he said.

And larger communities like New York demonstrated that they "were more concerned about consensus than their own parochial interests," Kraar said.

After the assembly was over, a group of four leaders from the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey sat in the Miami hotel lounge and reflected on the intense meeting.

### More Involved Than Just Money

They pointed out that while they were pleased with CJF's formula and the well-organized assembly, on a grass-roots level, the drama of Soviet emigration could not necessarily be measured in terms of parliamentary resolutions, "fair share" formulas or in dollars and cents.

"There's a component to this beyond money," said Dick Samuels, who chairs the Central Jersey federation campaign.

While their federation agencies have been stretched financially to accommodate 55 Soviet immigrants who came to their region last month,

"whatever it is costing us in strain and effort is paying off in the way our community is coming together," Samuels said.

He said volunteers have been transporting Soviets from the airport to their homes and hosting them for their first weeks in America.

The four federation leaders said they were leaving Miami determined not only to settle Soviet Jews in their own area successfully, but to convey to their community that fund raising this year would not be "business as usual."

They expressed confidence that the challenge of funding resettlement in Israel will be met, whatever the price tag.

"The rank and file of American Jewry will not let history pass them by," said Burt Lazarow, the Central Jersey federation's vice president. "We, as American Jewish leaders, will see to that."

## SENATORS URGE BUSH TO REJECT IDEA OF CUTTING AID TO ISRAEL

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- At least 70 senators have signed a letter to President Bush urging him to reject any proposal to cut aid to Israel and Egypt in order to help countries in Eastern Europe.

"Budgetary realities force us to make difficult choices, but retrenching on our commitment to assistance to Israel and Egypt would not be a wise choice," said the letter, which was initiated by Sens. Carl Levin (D-Mich.) and Pete Wilson (R-Calif.).

The letter was a response to a suggestion by Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) that 5 percent of the funds going to the five largest recipients of U.S. foreign aid, including Israel and Egypt, should be used to help Eastern Europe and Panama.

"It is vital that the United States act, and act vigorously, to reinforce the democratic trends in the nations of Eastern Europe," the senators wrote Bush.

"However, we should not and need not provide this support in ways which damage other foreign policy or security interests of the United States.

"In the Middle East, we should reaffirm the support of the United States for upholding our foreign assistance and commitments to Israel and Egypt," the letter said.

It warned that "diminution of that support will send the wrong signals to the most extreme and violent factions in the area."

The letter, which was signed by Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-Maine), is evidence that there is little chance of any cut in aid for Israel and Egypt, at least this year.

The Bush administration's 1991 budget, submitted to Congress on Jan. 29, includes the full \$3 billion in foreign and economic aid for Israel and \$2.3 billion for Egypt -- amounts the two countries have received for several years.

The administration has expressed support for Dole's call to give the president greater flexibility in foreign aid by not earmarking most of the allocations. At present, 92 percent of foreign aid and 82 percent of economic aid is earmarked.

But Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger told reporters last week that even if the earmarking was removed, Israel and Egypt would continue to receive the same level of U.S. aid.

## LAWMAKER URGES U.S. TO DROP PLANS TO BUILD VOA TRANSMITTER IN NEGEV

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- Citing environmental concerns and the diminishing military threat from the Soviet Union, a congressman this week called on the U.S. government to drop plans to build a Voice of America transmitter in Israel's Negev desert.

Rep. James Scheuer (D-N.Y.), who spoke to reporters in his Capitol Hill office Tuesday, on his 70th birthday, has no clear plan for redistributing the money, which he said could go to deficit reduction, to domestic programs or to Israeli cooperative projects with other countries.

Construction has not yet begun on the transmitter, and Israel has spent only about \$64 million of the \$247 million that Congress earmarked for the project after the United States and Israel signed an agreement to build the transmitter in 1987.

The VOA has long been one of the U.S. government's chief instruments in the propaganda war against communism. Erecting a transmitter in Israel would bolster the strength and range of the station's broadcast signal in Eastern Europe, which until recently was regularly jammed by Soviet authorities.

But in the wake of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of glasnost, or greater openness, political support for the VOA and other anti-communist informational projects appears to be waning.

In a letter this week to key congressional colleagues, Scheuer wrote, "The final death knell for this project should be the recent dramatic changes that have taken place in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union."

## Israel Said To Have Concerns

But there are other issues at stake, as well.

Four environmental groups joined Scheuer in expressing concerns about how the transmitter would upset bird migration patterns and require the Israel Defense Force to relocate a base, thereby closing off a large portion of the remaining open desert landscape of the Negev.

The groups are the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, Friends of the Earth, National Audubon Society and the Sierra Club.

The State Department issued a statement Wednesday saying that the Israeli government is "studying a number of issues related to the project, including an environmental-impact study submitted by the Board of International Broadcasting. We are awaiting the Israeli government's decision."

A State Department official said Israel, too, has serious concerns about the project.

But Ruth Yaron, spokeswoman at the Israeli Embassy here, had no comment on the project's merit.

According to Scheuer, the Israelis feel "that there was a great deal of pressure on them in 1987 to cooperate with the United States" to overcome Soviet jamming of VOA broadcasts in Central Asia and Eastern Europe.

"The Israeli Defense Force had real reservations" about the project, because "they had to move at least one enormous military air base.

"But they did it to accommodate events," said Scheuer. "They won't say that publicly, but there is no zeal whatsoever that I could detect speaking to Israeli officials for this project."

**AJCOMMITTEE BOARD APPROVES PLAN TO RESTRUCTURE ORGANIZATION RADICALLY**  
By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- In an effort to come to terms with a changing organizational mission and a gaping budget deficit, the leadership of the American Jewish Committee has embarked upon a radical restructuring plan.

Reports that the organization plans to eliminate some of its existing departments and lay off an estimated 38 employees were confirmed Wednesday by Sholom Comay, the organization's national president. The organization has a worldwide staff of approximately 275 personnel.

Comay also said the agency's budget next year will be 25 percent leaner than the one it began this fiscal year with.

For the moment, there apparently has been no decision to close regional offices across the country, but the organization will study the feasibility of keeping them open.

The reorganization plan was approved during a four-day meeting of the agency's Board of Governors in St. Petersburg, Fla., that ended Sunday night.

AJCommittee's departments of education and urban affairs are among those that will be completely eliminated once the plan is put into effect.

The department of international relations will be slimmed down and moved to the AJCommittee Washington office, "in order to pursue more effectively our efforts on behalf of Israel, Soviet Jewry and Jewish communities at risk," said Comay.

The organization will eliminate its activities in Western Europe and South America.

Comay said that Harvey Feldman, who currently heads the international relations department in New York, will leave the organization. The new Washington international relations office will be run by David Harris, presently the organization's Washington representative.

"We will be focusing on contacts with the State Department, the administration and the Catholic church," said Mimi Alperin, who chairs AJCommittee's National Executive Council.

**'Present Tense' To Cease Publishing**

Alperin explained that the restructuring decisions were made by the organization's lay leadership after a close examination of whether the AJCommittee, which bills itself as "the pioneer human relations agency in the United States," was fulfilling its original mandate of solidifying ties between Jews and other groups, protecting Jews from anti-Semitism and promoting Jewish life.

In choosing which programs to cut, "we took a look at what we were doing and what other organizations are doing," Alperin said. "We kept what we felt we did better than other organizations and the things that no other organizations are doing."

For much of its 84-year-old history, AJCommittee has been considered the dean of American Jewish organizations. But in recent years, it has been challenged externally by Jewish organizations with more aggressive fund-raising strategies and internally by staff instability.

The agency has changed executive vice presidents five times in the last decade.

One of the most visible changes will be AJCommittee's decision to cease sponsorship of

the liberal magazine *Present Tense*. The conservative journal *Commentary* will, however, continue to publish.

Comay and Alperin said that both magazines had been informed that AJCommittee could no longer subsidize them. *Commentary* was able to raise funds, so it will no longer cost the organization additional money. But it will remain housed rent-free at AJCommittee headquarters.

*Present Tense*, which publishes articles often critical of Israel and the American Jewish establishment, apparently was unable to obtain sufficient outside funding. Editor Murray Pollner said that its March/April issue will be its last.

"The real tragedy of this," Pollner said, "is that the organized and established Jewish life will no longer have a journal of dissent. The death of our magazine means that serious writers who question existing policies no longer have any forum but the non-Jewish mainstream press."

**CABINET MINISTERS POINT FINGERS OVER AIRPORT CHAOS RESPONSIBILITY**  
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- The Inner Cabinet met Wednesday for a short discussion of the terrorist attack on an Israeli tour bus in Egypt, but the discussion soon turned into counter-charges over who was responsible for the chaos that reigned at Ben-Gurion Airport when the dead and wounded arrived there.

Relatives of the victims, who were summoned to the airport on Monday to find out which hospitals their kin were taken to, complained bitterly of callous treatment by the police and misinformation from the authorities.

All occurred before television news cameras, to the embarrassment of the various ministries.

The Foreign Ministry came in for the most scathing criticism. Its deputy director general, David Sultan, reported to the senior ministers that the ministry's situation room coordinated information coming from Egypt to pass on to relatives and friends.

But he admitted it was not fully informed.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin called the Foreign Ministry's report "a scandal," and said its handling of the situation was "inexcusable."

Rabin said that if a similar situation were to arise in the future, the Israel Defense Force would take full and exclusive control.

The Likud-controlled Foreign Ministry also was battered by two party hard-liners, Ariel Sharon and Yitzhak Moda'i, who are challenging Yitzhak Shamir's leadership of Likud.

Sharon, blaming the Foreign Ministry, said the families should not have been invited to the airport, "and certainly not the media who made it into a media event."

Rabin agreed. He said the Hercules transport plane that brought back the casualties should have been directed to land at a secluded military section of the airport, far from the eyes of press and public.

At the Inner Cabinet meeting, there were demands by Sharon and Moda'i to send a sharp protest to the Egyptian government and insist that Egypt expel all persons connected with the Palestine Liberation Organization and other terrorist groups.

Israel's ambassador to Cairo, Shimon Shamir, who was summoned home for the Cabinet meeting, said his contacts with the Egyptian authorities had been "sympathetic, correct and helpful."

**CNN APOLOGIZES FOR MISUSING REMARKS  
PROFESSOR MADE ABOUT ARIEL ID TAGS**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- The president of Cable News Network, Ted Turner, has apologized to Hebrew University Professor Israel Gutman for the "unintentional" distortion of an interview the Israeli scholar gave CNN last year.

Gutman, a Holocaust survivor and leading researcher at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial and museum, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on Monday that he was not fully satisfied with Turner's letter, but would not pursue the matter.

The apology was for the way CNN used remarks made by Gutman in a May 1989 interview concerning a decision by the West Bank Jewish township of Ariel to require Arab laborers it employed to wear distinguishing tags.

The broadcast seemed to imply that Gutman was comparing the Ariel ordinance -- which came under fire and was swiftly withdrawn -- to the yellow star the Nazis forced Jews to wear.

Turner wrote, "It was never the intent of CNN to take a statement or the gist of a statement by you to us out of context, and certainly not to embarrass you with your colleagues."

**ISRAELI JUDGE MUST DECIDE  
IF WOMAN HAS 'RIGHT TO DIE'**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- An Israeli judge who must decide on a person's right to reject life-saving medical treatment may find himself in conflict with religious authorities, if he rules in favor of an 84-year-old Tiberias woman who refuses to allow her gangrenous leg to be amputated.

The patient, Ruth Trabelsi, says she prefers to die rather than lose her leg.

Judge Haim Gershon, whose Nazareth District Court has jurisdiction over Tiberias, has ordered state attorneys to quickly prepare an opinion as to whether the woman fully understands the meaning of her decision.

The standoff between patient and doctors led the Poriya Hospital in Tiberias to file charges against Trabelsi.

The so-called "right-to-die" case has generated intense interest in Israel.

According to Dr. Ram Ishai, chairman of the Israel Medical Association, the court can only determine that the patient understands and appreciates the significance of her decision. If she does, then ultimately she has the right to take it, Ishai said.

But Rabbi Yisrael Lau, the Ashkenazic chief rabbi of Tel Aviv, asserted Wednesday that according to halachah (traditional Jewish law), ill persons have no right to prevent their cure.

The rabbi maintained that doctors and society in general have the right to forcibly prevent a patient from committing passive suicide by refusing medical treatment.

Lau said that all halachah needs to ascertain is whether the treatment definitely will save a life that would otherwise be doomed.

Earlier, Trabelsi told the judge and members of her family that "life and death are in the hands of God" and that therefore she would not allow the doctors to cut off the infected limb.

Judge Gershon, who was to have ruled on the case Wednesday, postponed his decision for another day.

**GAMBLING IS A SURE BET FOR ISRAEL  
IF GOVERNMENT PANEL HAS ITS WAY**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- Israel is seriously considering legalized gambling and has named a special committee to recommend how it can be introduced and regulated.

Finance Minister Shimon Peres has appointed retired Tel Aviv District Court Judge Binyamin Cohen to head the panel. Asher Arian, a senior economist at the Finance Ministry, will serve as secretary.

The committee will study various initiatives to set up casinos in Eilat or other holiday resorts and to introduce horse racing. It also will review the two existing gambling outlets: the Mifal Hapayis lottery and the Sportoto weekly soccer pool.

According to Yitzhak Feinberg, director of the Council for Sports Gambling, which runs the soccer pool, Sportoto and Mifal Hapayis generate a combined annual revenue of about \$400 million. The money is channeled into sports and educational facilities around the country.

The pool and the lottery provide virtually the only approved outlets for the gambling urge. Both are publicly supervised under existing laws.

Gambling casinos are illegal in Israel. There have been attempts to establish off-shore casinos in pleasure boats anchored off the beach at Eilat.

The panel also will look into the charity raffles run by non-profit organizations, such as the Magen David Adom, which raffles off dozens of cars each year, and the promotional raffles by the mass-circulation newspapers.

**THERE'S SOMETHING FISHY ABOUT  
NEW CAVIAR DEVELOPED BY ISRAEL**

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- From artificial caviar to self-destructing plastic bags, Israeli technology is forging ahead with new inventions.

There is indeed something fishy about the fake caviar developed at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa. It contains fish and fish oil, but not fish eggs.

The ingredients include vegetable oils, combined with stabilizers and other substances not specified.

Yet the taste is nearly identical with the real gourmet delicacy, according to Dr. Uri Kogan, head of Technion's food engineering department.

The only real difference is the price. While the Russian import, made from eggs of the Caspian Sea sturgeon, retails at \$100 for 3.5 ounces, the Israeli facsimile will sell for about \$8.

The ersatz caviar, which took three years to develop, has received a kashrut certificate from Haifa's chief rabbi and a culinary certificate from Kinsley Clark, chef at the five-star Dan Carmel Hotel in Haifa.

Meanwhile, Israel's Supersol supermarket chain announced this week that it will hereafter use and sell plastic bags that decompose after exposure to sunlight.

They are an improvement over biodegradable plastic products that disintegrate after contact with earth but do not break down on the hard concrete of city streets.

The bags were jointly developed and patented by an Israeli scientist, Dan Gilad of Kibbutz Hazorea, and an American, Professor Gerald Scott of the University of Iowa.