

VOL. 68 - 73rd YEAR

MARCH 28, 1990

NO. 60

**JEWISH AGENCY OFFICIALS HOPEFUL
THAT HUNGARY WILL RESUME FLIGHTS**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- Jewish Agency officials were hopeful Tuesday that Hungary will soon resume charter flights carrying Soviet Jewish immigrants from Budapest to Tel Aviv.

The Hungarian state airline Malev halted them last week after it was threatened by the extremist Islamic Jihad with attacks on airports and aircraft.

But the Hungarian government apparently has taken a firmer stand against the Malev move.

"We are very encouraged by the strong position adopted by the government of Hungary against the decision of Malev to stop the flights," Agency spokesman Gad Ben-Ari told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Israeli officials believe eventually the Hungarian government will convince the air carrier to resume the flights.

The differences between the Hungarian government and the state-owned airline, they feel, simply reflect the democratization process in Hungary.

Some of the optimism here derives from the knowledge that the United States has been pressuring the Hungarians to reverse the decision.

Fight Off Terrorism

Foreign Minister Moshe Arens told the Army Radio on Tuesday that Israel would turn to world public opinion, including Eastern European countries, to fight off threats of terrorism.

"We are trying to explain to Hungary, which has switched from a totalitarian regime to a democracy, that giving in to terrorism is not one of the characteristics of democracies," Arens said.

Malev is not at the moment operating charter flights to Israel or carry immigrants on its regular flights to Tel Aviv.

The Jewish Agency has increased the number of El Al charters from Budapest to meet demand. El Al is operating almost daily charter flights from the Hungarian capital this week.

Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki of Poland announced Sunday in New York that Soviet Jews could use his county in transit to Israel.

Arens said Israel acknowledged the offer with "appreciation," but did not say whether Poland would be used as an alternative route for Soviet immigrants.

In Washington, the United States praised Poland for its decision, and denounced Malev for stopping flights in the face of terrorist threats.

"We deplore the terrorist threats which have led to these decisions," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler. "We believe a more appropriate course of action" would be to "provide the required levels of security."

Robert Lifton, president of the American Jewish Congress, met Tuesday with Peter Varkonyi, the Hungarian ambassador to the United States and "pointed out the position taken by Poland was a courageous position, and did not contrast well next to Hungary's position."

Lifton called the meeting with Varkonyi an "open, warm and cordial exchange."

**EGYPT: SOVIET EMIGRATION OK,
JUST NOT IN THE TERRITORIES**

By Allison Kaplan

UNITED NATIONS, March 27 (JTA) -- The Egyptian ambassador here asked the two superpowers Tuesday to guarantee that Soviet Jews emigrating to Israel would not be settled in the West Bank or Gaza Strip.

Ambassador Amre Moussa, speaking before the Security Council, said his country would not take issue with the overall right of "Soviet Jews or others" to emigrate to Israel.

But he added that settlement by immigrants and other Israelis in the territories was "illegal" and that "certain criteria should be applied to this emigration in order to ensure" that the Soviet emigres do not settle there.

He contended that the United States and the Soviet Union must "ensure that the rights of the Palestinian people shall not be jeopardized by Israel's increased immigration."

When condemning the settlement of Jews beyond Israel's 1967 borders, Moussa made reference to President Bush's now-infamous remarks regarding East Jerusalem.

He pointed out that "the United States government, at the highest level, recently once again publicly reaffirmed the inadmissibility of establishing settlements in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem."

Security Council Debate

Moussa made his speech during a Security Council debate on Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel, which was resumed Tuesday after being postponed from March 15.

The debate was scheduled to continue Wednesday morning.

According to Yuval Rotem, a spokesman at the Israeli mission here, the various countries on the Security Council have not been able to agree on a resolution to bring to a vote.

He contended that the movement for such a resolution has "lost its whole momentum."

Drafts written by Europe, the United States, the Soviet Union and the Arab nations have all been circulated, but no single draft was expected to be taken up immediately, Rotem said.

Last Thursday, Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasir Arafat urged U.N. action to prevent the Soviet Jews from settling in the territories.

During Tuesday's debate, Yemen, Syria, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and China all sharply criticized Israeli human rights practices, and suggested that Israel harbored plans to replace the Palestinians living on the West Bank with Soviet Jewish immigrants.

Some even implied that the Soviet Jews were going to Israel against their will.

Syrian representative Issa Awad, referring to the tightened U.S. immigration restrictions, asked if U.S. policy was perhaps a deliberate move to "herd Jews like cattle to Israel."

Ahmet Engin Ansay, who spoke for the Organization of the Islamic Conference, denounced the recent U.S. Senate resolution calling for an undivided Jerusalem, saying that it was an attempt to sabotage the peace process.

ISRAELIS AT U.S. EMBASSY INVESTIGATED FOR ILLEGAL ISSUANCE OF TOURIST VISAS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 27 (JTA) -- A dozen Israeli employees of the consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv were indicted Sunday on charges of having illegally issued hundreds of U.S. tourist visas.

They are reported to have smuggled passports of visa applicants into the embassy, where they were secretly stamped and added to the pile of passports awaiting official signatures.

The charges against the 12 include forgery and accepting bribes. The indictments say the crimes were considered very serious because they were committed against a friendly nation.

Israelis who feared that their official visa applications might be rejected are reported to have paid thousands of dollars to the local employees involved in the scam in order to obtain the illegal visas.

The operation is said to have been going on for some months. The employees were investigated by embassy officials and the police.

Hundreds of Israelis line up daily for hours outside the U.S. Consulate on Hayarkon Street in Tel Aviv, awaiting their turn to enter the building to present their visa applications.

Many of them are rejected for various reasons, often because it is believed the persons applying might not return to Israel and would remain illegally in the United States.

FRANCE BEGINS ACTION AGAINST LE PEN FOR RACIST INCITEMENT

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, March 27 (JTA) -- The Justice Ministry announced Tuesday that legal proceedings have begun against Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the extreme right-wing National Front.

An investigating magistrate formally charged him on March 22 with "incitement to racial hatred" and insulting a Cabinet minister.

Le Pen is expected to stand trial before the end of the year and if convicted will face a one-year prison sentence and a fine of about \$55,000.

The European Parliament in Strasbourg lifted Le Pen's immunity by a 91-18 vote in December 1989.

His National Front, which polled 15 percent of the popular vote in the first round of the French presidential elections in June 1988, campaigns against foreign workers in France, mainly Arabs from North Africa.

Although Le Pen claims he is not anti-Semitic, he has made frequent public statements denying the Holocaust occurred.

The criminal charges against him stem from his allegations in 1988 that there was an "international Jewish conspiracy" to change France's political system and social climate.

He made that remark after being rebuked in September 1988 for a ghoulish pun on the surname of Michel Durafour, who had just been named minister of public service in the Socialist government of President Francois Mitterrand.

"Four" is a French word for oven or crematorium.

While French Jews welcomed the announcement that Le Pen will be prosecuted, leading sociologists quoted in *Le Monde* on Tuesday cautioned that his trial could boomerang.

His prestige could be enhanced if he is

acquitted and, if convicted, he could play the role of martyr, they said.

Jews meanwhile actively protested the visit to Lyon on Monday of Le Pen's West German counterpart, Franz Schoenhuber.

The former Waffen SS officer, who heads West Germany's extreme right-wing Republican Party, went to Lyon at the invitation of the National Front. He was confronted by some 300 demonstrators led by Lyon Chief Rabbi Richard Wertenschlag and prevented from reaching the center of town.

Mayor Michel Noir of Lyon refused to lease a city-owned building to the National Front for a reception for Schoenhuber.

RACIST VIOLENCE DWINDLES IN FRANCE, BUT VERBAL, WRITTEN INSULTS ABOUND

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, March 27 (JTA) -- Racist inspired violence is decreasing in France, but oral threats, written insults and acts of vandalism have dramatically increased over the last three years, according to a government-sponsored study issued here Tuesday.

The report, ordered by Prime Minister Michel Rocard in order to improve hate crimes legislation, reveals that 53 racially inspired acts of violence were committed last year, resulting in one dead and 30 wounded.

This figure compares to 64 in 1988 and 46 in 1987. The targets were mostly Arabs, chiefly those of North African origin. Jews, however, were the targets of many of the 237 cases of oral threats and written insults noted last year.

The 1987 trial in Lyon of convicted Nazi Klaus Barbie has, according to the report, lifted some of the language barriers and has contributed to a marked increase in anti-Semitic slogans daubed on synagogues and Jewish community buildings.

The report reveals that nine people out of 10 believe that racism is "widespread" or "rather widespread," and 70 percent of those polled say that "the behavior of certain (members of minority groups) justifies a racist reaction."

Current hate crimes legislation is based on a law enacted in 1972. The administration wants to modernize the law and stiffen penalties provided for anti-Semitic and other racist acts.

The prime minister plans to release the full report to the various political parties, in order to work out a joint interparty approach for a new legislative project on this issue.

EL AL TO OPEN BERLIN OFFICE

By David Kantor

BONN, March 27 (JTA) -- The state-owned Israeli airline El Al is planning to open an office in Berlin, in order to facilitate direct flights from Israel, a company spokesman confirmed today in Frankfurt.

The spokesman also said that the new office will handle advertising campaigns in the newly open market of 16 million East Germans, the majority of whom were not allowed to travel out of their country until last November.

The El Al plans are in accordance with the growing awareness among Israeli companies that Berlin is likely to increase its status as an important center of commerce and transportation, in addition to possible new functions as the capital of a future united Germany.

MOSCOW JEWISH FILM FEST A HIT, DESPITE TENSE PRELIMINARIES

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, March 27 (JTA) -- The Jewish Film Festival in Moscow got off to a flying start Saturday evening, following a tense week during which city officials first canceled the festival and then reversed their decision.

David Gamburg, a partner in the Los Angeles management firm that handled the eight months of negotiations with Soviet authorities, confirmed Monday that the screenings were on track as scheduled, according to conversations he had the previous day with festival organizers in Moscow.

Gamburg said that the sold-out opening had gone off smoothly, without any anti-Semitic demonstrations. Fear of such demonstrations had been cited by Moscow city officials as a major reason for canceling the eight-day festival.

The Moscow correspondent of the Los Angeles Times reported on the reactions of first-night patrons after they viewed the American film "Crossing Delancey."

In the 1988 romantic comedy, set in New York, the thoroughly modern Jewish heroine tussles with her grandmother, the neighborhood matchmaker and her own conscience to decide whether to accept the proposal of a vendor of kosher pickles over the attentions of a conceited novelist.

What seemed to strike Moscow viewers most forcefully was the affirmation and naturalness with which the characters dealt with their Jewishness.

'OK To Be Jewish'

Mikhail Shtein, a 24-year-old literature student, was quoted by the Times as observing, "It seems really OK to be Jewish. In the film, people recognize, of course, that they are Jewish. But this is not a burden, and they even celebrate it."

Shtein said Soviet Jews were amazed that the characters in the film felt comfortable with their Jewishness. "They accept it, others around them accept it, and life goes on."

Deborah Kaufman of San Francisco, director of the festival, told the Saturday night audience at the prestigious Rossiya Hotel theater, off Red Square, that the films were intended to "challenge all stereotypes and images of Jews."

The message came through to one viewer, Roman Spector, a prominent Jewish activist in Moscow. "We Soviet Jews now have a real possibility to become acquainted with the life of Jews elsewhere -- in Israel, in Europe and America, elsewhere in the Diaspora -- from which we were cut off for so long," he said.

The festival's co-director, Janis Plotkin, said that a major goal in bringing the films to Moscow was to help Soviet Jews recover both their personal and communal sense of Jewish identity.

Through this Saturday, 29 feature and documentary films will be screened at three large theatres, with total attendance expected to reach 50,000.

Hollywood director Paul Mazursky will host the presentation of his film, "Enemies, A Love Story," based on the novel by Isaac Bashevis Singer.

Among the other films are "Beyond the Walls" and "Hamsin" from Israel; "The Chosen" from the United States; and "Au Revoir les Enfants" from France.

SOUTHERN JEWISH WIDOW CHARACTER GRABS OSCARS, HOLLYWOOD'S HEART

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, March 27 (JTA) -- A feisty, prideful Jewish widow of 72 won the heart of Hollywood on Monday evening, as the film "Driving Miss Daisy" won Oscars for best picture and for Jessica Tandy as best actress in the title role.

Writer Alfred Uhry, who modeled Miss Daisy on his grandmother, created both the play and the movie version of her relationship to her black chauffeur in a changing South and carried off the Academy Award for best screenplay adaptation.

In the other writing award, Tom Schulman beat out Woody Allen, Nora Ephron and two other competitors to garner the Oscar for his original screenplay of "Dead Poets Society," the story of an idealistic but irreverent literature teacher at a starchy boys' boarding school.

Two movies keyed to Holocaust themes came away empty-handed. "Enemies, A Love Story," based on Isaac Bashevis Singer's novel of the love-hate relationships among four Holocaust survivors in post-war New York, had four nominees in contention.

Despite critical acclaim, neither supporting actresses Anjelica Houston and Lena Olin, nor screenwriters Paul Mazursky and Roger Simon ended up in the win column.

The same fate befell Jessica Lange, nominated for best actress for her role in "Music Box." Lange portrayed a Chicago lawyer who defends her immigrant father, charged with wartime atrocities against Hungarian Jews.

Woody Allen's "Crimes and Misdemeanors," set entirely in a contemporary American Jewish milieu, failed to ignite the Academy voters. There were no Oscars for Allen, nominated for both best director and original screenplay, nor for Martin Landau, who was in the running for best supporting actor.

In the less glamorous categories, Ray Errol Fox's short documentary on the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum in Jerusalem, "Preserving The Past To Ensure The Future," also did not make the winner's circle.

ISRAELI PHILHARMONIC MAKES PLANS FOR FIRST CONCERT TOUR IN USSR

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 27 (JTA) -- The Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra will travel to the Soviet Union at the end of April for its first concert tour there, which will include performances in Moscow, Leningrad and Riga.

Conductor Zubin Mehta plans to audition potential IPO players among Jews awaiting exit visas to Israel.

One-quarter of the philharmonic members are Soviet emigres who are returning to the Soviet Union for the first time since their emigration to Israel. Auditions of potential immigrants have already been scheduled.

"We are looking forward to going," Mehta said Monday. "Itzhak Perlman -- who will perform the Tchaikovsky violin concerto as soloist -- the orchestra and I are doing it all without honorarium to show the (the Soviet audiences) the good will of the IPO and Israel."

The orchestra had planned to visit the Soviet Union in 1966, when Israel still had diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, but their tour was cancelled for unknown reasons.

**THE NEW SOVIET ALIYAH:
FOR MOST OLIM, ECONOMIC NEEDS
TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER POLITICS**
[Part 3 Of A Series]
By Allison Kaplan

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Recent Soviet Jewish immigrants aren't very eager to talk politics.

Right now, they are interested mainly in the policies of the Israeli government that will help or hinder them in their quest for a successful life in Israel.

Former prisoner of Zion Natan Sharansky is a case in point. Since immigrating to Israel four years ago, he has chosen not to lend his prestige to any single political party. Instead, he cultivates relations with all parties in order to achieve the goals of his advocacy group, the Soviet Jewry Zionist Forum.

Like Sharansky before them, Soviet Jews settling in Israel today only talk about such things as the future of the administered territories and the "Who is a Jew" controversy to the extent that these issues directly affect their lives.

In one sense, the immigrants learning Hebrew at the Mevasseret Zion absorption center must literally face the situation on the West Bank every day. The windows of their classroom look right into hills that lie beyond Israel's 1967 border.

Felix Kramer and his wife, Natasha, who have been in Israel for six months, have considered living in the administered territories, situated just beyond their doorstep.

Despite his short time in Israel, Felix already has formed an opinion on the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"I think they are Israeli territory," he said. "There already is a Palestinian state -- Jordan. How many Arab countries do they need to have?"

'More Worried About The Arabs'

Frankly, Kramer said, he can't understand why Americans, particularly American Jews, are so interested in which side of the so-called Green Line he chooses to live on.

"It seems they are more worried about the Arabs than about us," said Kramer, a serious-looking, balding man whose young son clings to his trousers.

"It's a little dangerous to live in Hebron," Natasha admitted. "But there is a possibility of going to Kiryat Arba," the large Jewish settlement located adjacent to Hebron.

Only a small percentage of Soviet Jews have chosen to settle in the West Bank until now. But how many will seek housing there in the long term is still an open question.

The mayor of the West Bank settlement of Ariel, Ron Nachmann, loudly defying U.S. wishes, is aggressively trying to attract Soviets to his settlement. He has been bringing Soviet immigrants to his settlement, but far from the large numbers he would like.

"Our class took a trip to Ariel," said Galia Lando, who teaches Soviet olim in Rishon le-Zion. "They were polite, but when we came back home, nobody seemed interested in settling there. They said it looked like a lonely place."

"Anyone who wants can go there," said Leonid, a student in the ulpan class. "But nobody wants to go there."

Leonid explained that the immigrants' desire for a secure future cannot be satisfied in the face of Palestinian hostility.

If Soviet Jews move to the West Bank in significant numbers, it will not be because of a government initiative or their own ideological beliefs. More likely, it will be the same force that drives many Israelis to move there: sheer economic necessity.

But even the Soviets with no intention of moving to the West Bank highly resent the prospect of being restricted from living in any part of the country. As in every other aspect of life, they want the freedoms and privileges of any other Israeli.

It is for the same reason that an Interior Ministry requirement that immigrants must prove their Jewishness before being registered as Jews has become a sore point with the Soviet newcomers.

Demonstrations Threatened

In mid-February, Sharansky's Soviet Jewry Zionist Forum threatened demonstrations if clerks at the Interior Ministry continued to demand documented proof of the immigrants' Jewishness.

Mariana Zhoutyah, an English teacher from Kishinev, has been here a month. The questioning of her Jewishness is a blot on her mainly optimistic feelings about life in Israel.

"I left my birth certificate in my office in the Soviet Union," she said. "I am afraid now to go to try to get an identity card for myself, my mother and my children."

Her fear stems from the experiences of a neighbor.

"He is a blind man, 61 or 62 years old. When he went to the Ministry of the Interior," she said, "he didn't have his own birth certificate, but he had his daughter's saying that he was a Jew."

Despite this, the clerk at the ministry would not register him as a Jew.

Mariana shook her head, pointing out the "absurdity" of suffering discrimination in the Soviet Union and then having her Judaism questioned in Israel.

While many of the Soviet newcomers are not yet ardent Zionists, the fear that many of them are simply using Israel as a way station for the United States seems unwarranted.

Born-Again Jewish Nationalists

Though their Zionist and religious education has been minimal, most profess to have chosen Israel voluntarily. Some have become born-again Jewish nationalists after suffering anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

If they were not originally convinced that Israel should be their destination, they are convincing themselves now that they are in the right place.

Whether they are telling the truth or have adopted this positive outlook because they are already in Israel, these immigrants seem sincerely committed to making it where they are.

The seriousness of their attitude and the strength of their drive to succeed sometimes amuses those working with them.

"My Hebrew class was very upset one day when we canceled class one afternoon and had a party. They complained to me, saying 'What? No more studies?' " said Galia Lando, the ulpan teacher.

"We will have a 10-day vacation during Passover," she said. "My students are already anxiously asking whether we will make those days up."