

VOL. 68 - 73rd YEAR

TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 1990

NO. 118

**U.S. WELCOMES STATEMENT FROM SHARON,
BUT STILL CONCERNED ABOUT JERUSALEM**

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, June 25 (JTA) -- Israeli Housing Minister Ariel Sharon's statement that Soviet Jews would not be settled in the West Bank or Gaza Strip is a "hopeful development," the State Department said Monday.

Sharon's statement, made Sunday to delegates attending the Jewish Agency Assembly in Jerusalem, was also welcomed by a number of American Jewish groups.

But it remains unclear whether the United States will insist that Israel not encourage Soviet Jews to settle in East Jerusalem, as well.

The United States has said it will not release \$400 million in loan guarantees to help build housing for Soviet Jews in Israel until it receives assurances that the immigrants will not be settled in the administered territories.

Israel considers East Jerusalem, which it formally annexed in 1967, to be an inseparable part of the capital. The United States views it as part of the disputed territories.

The \$400 million in loan guarantees was contained in a multi-billion dollar supplemental appropriations bill signed into law by President Bush in late May.

Congress did not condition the \$400 million guarantee on the administration receiving assurances on East Jerusalem. For its part, the Bush administration has been vague for months on what assurances it wanted.

Could Be A Stumbling Block

While State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler on Monday said Sharon's comments "responded to international concerns, including our own," department sources said she was reluctant to fully endorse them, because of concern about East Jerusalem.

"We're still unclear, because we've seen various versions of (Sharon's statements), and we honestly don't know," one official said.

A source in the pro-Israel community said he did not think "it would be useful" for the United States to press the East Jerusalem issue. But he said all indications are that the administration is still concerned about Jews settling there.

"If the State Department was not satisfied with Ariel Sharon's remarks, then clearly, it could be a significant stumbling block," the source said.

President Bush, when asked about the housing loans at his news conference last week announcing suspension of the U.S. dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization, said the money was not to be used to finance new settlements in Israel's "post-1967 territories."

When Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly was pressed on the issue last week at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing, he "made no distinction, bottom line, between East Jerusalem and occupied territory," the source said.

An Israeli Embassy official said he "would be amazed" if Sharon's announcement applied to East Jerusalem.

"I don't think any Israeli government will ever take the position that Jews cannot live in a certain part of Jerusalem," the official said.

**UJA DRIVE FOR IMMIGRANTS A SUCCESS,
BUT JEWISH AGENCY FACES BIG DEFICIT**

By Charles Hoffman

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- An encouraging report on the progress of Operation Exodus, the special United Jewish Appeal campaign for Soviet Jewish aliyah, was overshadowed here Monday by forecasts of huge deficits in the Jewish Agency's immigration and absorption budgets over the next two years.

The national chairman of UJA, Marvin Lender, told delegates to the annual Jewish Agency Assembly that Operation Exodus has raised about 75 percent of its target of \$420 million, which is to be paid out over a three-year period. Keren Hayesod will raise another \$180 million from Jewish communities outside the United States, for a combined total of \$600 million.

"In less than four months," said Lender, "we have raised \$311 million. And by the end of September, we hope to be able to transfer this year's share, \$140 million, to the Jewish Agency."

Lender pointed out that the pledges made to Operation Exodus, plus those made to the regular campaign (about \$765 million) come to more than \$1.1 billion.

Most of the money raised so far has been from "big givers," he said, including 42 people who have given over \$1 million each. "The last \$109 million (of the \$420 million goal) will be the hardest, and will take lots of work," he said.

The fund-raising targets of Operation Exodus were set at the end of 1989, based on forecasts that about 70,000 Soviet Jews would make aliyah this fiscal year. Now, however, the Jewish Agency expects 150,000 newcomers to arrive this fiscal year from the Soviet Union.

The chairman of the agency's Budget and Finance Committee, Norman Lipoff, told assembly delegates that the larger numbers mean a projected deficit of \$280 million in the agency's budget for this year and next -- for a total of more than \$600 million. The agency pays for the immigrants' transportation costs, half of their initial absorption expenses and various social services.

A 'Substantial Emergency'

Lipoff, who is also the new chairman of the United Israel Appeal, described this situation as a "substantial emergency."

UJA leaders are reluctant to tamper with Operation Exodus at this point by raising targets in the middle of the campaign, which will be completed early next year. Israeli leaders, however, have been strongly urging UJA to raise more money this year for immediate aliyah and absorption needs.

Lipoff mentioned several alternatives for coping with the projected deficit that will be considered this week: cutting other agency programs, seeking increased U.S. government grants for absorption, raising more funds through Operation Exodus and reducing the agency's share of absorption services, with the Israeli government picking up more of the tab.

The assembly delegates listened attentively to a report by a leader of the Vaad, the umbrella organization for Soviet Jewish groups formed last

December. The Vaad delegation is attending the Jewish Agency Assembly for the first time.

Vaad leader Yosef Zissels said his organization stands for the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate, but also wants to "preserve Soviet Jewry as a national and cultural entity."

He said the Vaad is setting up a network of offices and advisers all over the Soviet Union to "help inform Soviet Jews about Israel and to start their absorption in Israel while they wait in the Soviet Union."

The Vaad will provide Hebrew courses, professional orientation and programs for children of prospective olim, he said.

35 More Emissaries Being Sent

Trevor Chinn, head of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors committee on Eastern Europe, said the agency now has 10 emissaries from Israel in the Soviet Union, and nine others have already completed their two-month terms.

Over the next two months, he said, 35 more emissaries will be dispatched, so that one will be stationed in every city with a large Jewish population.

The emissaries concentrate on preparing prospective olim for Israel, teaching Hebrew and developing Jewish identity.

Emissaries have run courses for 300 doctors in Moscow and 150 in Leningrad, to prepare them for Israel's certification requirements. Groups of teachers have been sent to Israel to train them to teach Hebrew and Jewish history.

"The Jewish Agency," Chinn said, "is becoming the most significant outside organization in the Soviet Union."

IRAN REJECTS DISASTER AID FROM ISRAEL, BUT ACCEPTING HELP FROM JEWISH GROUPS By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, June 25 (JTA) -- Though Iran has sent a public message that it does not want Israeli help in recovering from its disastrous series of earthquakes, it accepted relief funds Monday from an American Jewish organization.

Representatives from B'nai B'rith International turned over a check for \$1,000 to the Iranian interest section of the Algerian Embassy in Washington.

The check is B'nai B'rith's initial contribution to help the earthquake victims. It and the American Jewish World Service have set up "open mailboxes" for contributions to aid the thousands of victims.

Humanitarian efforts on the part of the Jewish community "transcend any consideration of ideology and politics," B'nai B'rith President Seymour Reich said in explaining his organization's decision to contribute the funds.

Amir Zamani, first secretary of the Iranian Mission to the United Nations, said the assistance being offered by the American Jewish groups is "perfectly fine," as long as it is "humanitarian, not political" -- meaning that there should be no Israeli participation in their efforts.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy has offered the Iranians Israeli expertise in assisting earthquake victims. He reportedly passed his offer of help through the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Israeli officials said that the Iranians have not formally refused their help through these channels. But Zamani confirmed news reports coming from the Iranian Foreign Ministry, which

said that Iran would not take aid from either Israel or South Africa.

When asked why Iran did not want to take advantage of the experience of Israeli medical personnel in earthquake relief, Zamani replied, "Iran has announced that its emergency treatment centers are fully staffed, and there is no need for any medical personnel, let alone Israeli doctors."

He did say, however, that he had been informed that Iranian Jews had been instrumental in relief efforts in his country.

Uriel Savir, Israel's consul general here, called it "symptomatic" for the Iranians to "mix politics into such a tragedy."

But he said it is up to the American Jewish groups to decide whether to offer relief. Israel is neither encouraging nor discouraging such efforts, he said.

'Jews Are Ready To Help'

Andrew Griffel, executive director of the American Jewish World Service, said that his group is "a humanitarian organization, committed to helping people who are suffering, regardless of race and religion."

"Unless Iran would refuse our assistance or make a blatantly anti-Jewish remark, we will offer our help," he said.

Griffel explained that the AJWS is working with Interaction, a U.S. umbrella group for international development, to identify an appropriate non-governmental agency in Iran through which to channel its contribution.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the United Jewish Appeal-funded agency that was active in aiding victims of the 1988 earthquake in Soviet Armenia, said Monday that it had not yet decided whether to set up an aid program for Iran.

"We are exploring what we can do that can be most effective and most helpful," said Aryeh Cooperstock, executive director of JDC's international development program.

The check from B'nai B'rith was presented to an Iranian official, who would not be identified, by Dr. Michael Neiditch, associate director of B'nai B'rith, and Rabbi Simeon Kobrinetz, a member of the group's Volunteer Services Committee.

Reich said that the initiative for the contribution originated with B'nai B'rith leadership in Los Angeles, whose membership includes a number of former Iranian Jews.

B'nai B'rith national leadership agreed, Reich said, that "it's important for the Iranians to see that the Jews are ready to help other people."

SUNNI GROUP TAKES CREDIT FOR RAID By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- An unknown Sunni Moslem group in Lebanon has claimed credit for Saturday's attempted seaborne raid on Israel, which was foiled by the Israeli navy.

A pro-Iranian group calling itself the Dawn Forces announced in Beirut that it lost two men in an encounter with the "Zionist enemy."

That corroborated the Israeli report that at least two terrorists were killed when a Devorah-class patrol boat chased and sank a motorboat carrying armed men off the southern Lebanon coast. The boat, a dinghy propelled by an outboard motor, was headed for Israel.

According to the Beirut announcement, another dinghy escaped with its crew.

**SHAMIR MEETS WITH U.N. ENVOY,
BUT DECLINES OFFER OF MEDIATION**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has politely declined an offer by the United Nations to mediate Israel's dispute with the Palestinians.

But he assured a visiting U.N. official here Monday that Israel was keenly interested in active U.S. involvement in Middle East peace efforts.

Shamir conferred with Jean-Claude Aime, a special envoy of U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar who was invited to Jerusalem by the Israeli government.

Aime, who is Haitian, is the senior Middle East expert in the secretary-general's office. He offered to serve as mediator himself.

Israeli sources said Shamir assured the U.N. envoy that Israel is as anxious as Perez de Cuellar to ease the tense atmosphere in the region.

He reiterated his government's commitment to Israel's May 1989 peace initiative and said he was ready to begin negotiations with Arab states and local Palestinians.

Aime met Shamir after visiting the administered territories. He will report back to the secretary-general in New York.

His mission, announced June 13, was planned before the Israeli invitation, which Perez de Cuellar described as "an interesting coincidence."

Aime also met with Foreign Minister David Levy, who was discharged Monday from a hospital in Afula, where he had been since suffering a mild heart attack on June 14.

Shamir told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Monday that he believed Washington's decision to suspend its dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization would facilitate the peace process through other avenues.

He dismissed as "PLO hysteria" the concern that the U.S. move would exacerbate tensions in the region.

Shamir declined to discuss with Knesset members the substance of the letter he is drafting in response to President Bush's query last week about the new Israeli government's peace policy.

**PERES, RABIN ARMING FOR SHOWDOWN
OVER LEADERSHIP OF THE LABOR PARTY**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin are marshaling their forces for a crucial showdown that will decide the leadership of the Labor Party.

Both men convened meetings of their supporters Monday.

Peres, the party chairman, managed to draw only five Labor members of the Knesset. More than half of Labor's Knesset faction is known to support Rabin.

But an impressive number of local party leaders showed up to back Peres, especially from development towns in the Negev and Galilee.

Addressing them, Peres said it is still possible in the long term, a national majority will develop "that favors a peace which does not impair security."

Peres also believes there is a chance for Labor to build good relations with the Orthodox parties, which are now members of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud-led coalition government.

Supporters of former Defense Minister Rabin, convinced the momentum is with him, announced they will formally request the party's Leadership Bureau on Thursday to schedule elections for chairman as soon as possible.

Peres says he is willing to face a challenge by Rabin. But he points out that, having been re-elected chairman in 1988 for the full term of the present Knesset, his incumbency should continue until the term expires in 1992.

The Rabin bandwagon, nevertheless, has been joined by most former Labor Party ministers. It got a strong boost over the weekend from former President Yitzhak Navon, who was deputy premier and minister of education in the last Likud-Labor unity government.

Support Among Party Rank And File

Navon said he believed Rabin's leadership would facilitate an electoral victory for Labor, which Peres was never able to achieve.

The only former ministers to attend a Peres strategy session last Friday were Haim Bar-Lev, Avraham Katz-Oz and Moshe Shahal. Shahal, who was formerly energy minister, said later that he favors the retirement of both Peres and Rabin to make room for a younger leader.

Bar-Lev, the police minister in the unity government, attended Monday's meeting of Peres supporters. He said he opposes a Peres-Rabin contest now, in the interests of party unity.

Other well-known figures backing Peres include Knesset members Yossi Beilin and Eli Dayan, and Nissim Zvilli, head of the Jewish Agency's Settlements Department.

Sources in the Peres camp contend that claims of a groundswell of support for Rabin are exaggerated. They maintain that despite a slippage among his former Cabinet colleagues and in Labor's Knesset faction, Peres' support remains strong in the Leadership Bureau and in the Central Committee, which has final say on procedural questions regarding the contest for chairman.

The Rabin camp is calling for a showdown by the end of July in either the Central Committee or the 2,000-strong party convention, which last convened before the November 1988 elections.

Those bodies have been considered Peres strongholds. But some of Rabin's supporters are counseling him to challenge Peres on his turf.

Widespread Disaffection With Peres

Other Rabin supporters advocate primary elections, in which all rank-and-file Labor Party members could participate. But that inevitably would delay the contest for months while a new membership registration drive is held. Advocates of this strategy are demanding that the primaries be held by mid-September.

A leading Rabin supporter, Knesset Finance Committee Chairman Avraham Shohat, was quoted Sunday in the Laborite newspaper Davar as saying that Rabin enjoyed "an overwhelming majority."

While independent observers were careful not to write off Peres prematurely, many see Navon's support of Rabin as reflecting disenchantment with Peres among all factions of the party--doves as well as hawks.

That sentiment, bluntly put, is that Peres, who has led Labor through four failed election campaigns, must be considered objectively unlikely to achieve a victory at the ballot box.

But Peres argued at his strategy session last Friday that the party should not be influenced by the vagaries of popularity polls.

**JEWISH GROUPS REACT ANGRILY
TO COURT RULINGS ON ABORTION**
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, June 25 (JTA) -- Jewish groups are angrily charging that a woman's right to an abortion has been further eroded by two Supreme Court decisions upholding laws requiring either parental or judicial approval for a teenager to end a pregnancy.

"I am outraged; it is much worse than we imagined," said Joan Bronk, president of the National Council of Jewish Women.

The decisions Monday on laws in Ohio and Minnesota "show that the Supreme Court is not tuned in with the reality of family life in America today," Bronk said.

The Ohio law, which requires a minor to notify at least one parent or guardian 24 hours before an abortion, was upheld by the Supreme Court in a 6-3 vote.

The law allows a teen-ager who does not want to notify her parents to get approval from a judge by proving she is mature enough to make her own decisions or that seeking parental approval would not be in her best interests.

In the Minnesota case, the court struck down a section of the law that required that both biological parents be notified 48 hours in advance of an abortion.

But by a 5-4 vote, it upheld another provision that allows a court to make the decision as an alternative to both parents.

"Strengthening the family is a matter of highest priority in Jewish life," said Ann Lewis, chairwoman of the American Jewish Congress Commission for Women's Equality.

"But parental consent and notification laws, even with judicial bypass procedures, do nothing to help families," she said.

Richard Fulton, associate legal director of the American Jewish Committee, also expressed "dismay" at the decisions, arguing that the requirement on parental notification will not help strengthen family life.

As a practical matter, those teen-agers who seek abortions without letting their parents know "may have valid reasons," including fear of child abuse or other types of violence, Fulton said. A judicial bypass may be beyond the capabilities of these minors in a crisis-laden atmosphere, he said.

'Young Women Are Going To Die'

Bronk of NCJW agreed it will be very difficult for these young women to face court procedures. "It is an extreme course of action to ask a young woman to take," she said. "I think young women are going to die because of these decisions."

Lewis of AJCongress agreed that the law could have dangerous consequences. "Desperate teen-agers may resort to life-threatening measures, such as seeking an abortion from an unlicensed or unqualified practitioner, or even attempting to self-abort," she warned.

But even if this does not occur, the decisions will cause teen-agers "to delay their efforts to obtain abortions with consequent risks to their health," Lewis said.

"Most minors will carry to term and begin a destructive cycle of poverty, both for the teenage parent and her child," she added.

The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith expressed "disappointment" with the court's decisions.

Thomas Homburger, chairman of ADL's Civil Rights Committee, said the Ohio and Minnesota laws "impermissibly interfere with a minor's personal and religious freedom."

These laws "reflect the view that abortion is morally wrong and that life begins at conception," Homburger said. "When the state imposes that view on women, it violates the First Amendment by interfering with an individual's religious belief."

AJCommittee, AJCongress and ADL all filed briefs against the two laws. The ADL brief was joined by B'nai B'rith Women, Catholics for a Free America and Women's American ORT.

**AUSTRALIA'S FIRST WAR-CRIMES TRIAL
DELAYED BECAUSE OF HEALTH CONCERNS**
By Jeremy Jones

SYDNEY, Australia, June 25 (JTA) -- Australia's first war-crimes trial has encountered further delays over the poor health of the 74-year-old defendant, Ivan Polyukhovich, and because of possible health hazards to defense and prosecution lawyers who will be gathering evidence near Chernobyl in the Soviet Union.

The trial, to be held in Adelaide, South Australia, cannot begin before September, when the High Court is expected to issue its ruling on a defense appeal challenging the procedure.

The health angle was raised by Polyukhovich's lawyers, who said his condition made it difficult for them to take instructions.

It also means the alleged mass killer will not be able to travel with them to the Ukraine, Israel and the United States to hear testimony from more than 50 witnesses.

Supporters of Polyukhovich insist on protection for the government and defense investigators, whom they say will be exposed to radiation or contamination when they question witnesses in the Ukrainian town of Rovno, about 173 miles from Chernobyl, site of the 1986 nuclear disaster.

The defense has also asked that when the court sits in Israel, the evidence be taken in Tel Aviv because "Jerusalem is more unstable than Tel Aviv."

They cited the acid attack by a Holocaust survivor on one of the defense lawyers for John Demjanjuk, another alleged war criminal of Ukrainian origin who was tried in Jerusalem.

Polyukhovich is alleged to have murdered 24 people and to have been knowingly involved in the murders of about 850 people in the Nazi-occupied Ukraine during World War II.

TEL AVIV-PRAGUE FLIGHTS HELD UP
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- The inauguration of direct flights between Tel Aviv and Prague was postponed for security reasons on Sunday by order of the Israeli Transport Ministry.

The joint service by El Al and the Czech airline, CSA, was to have begun this week under a pact signed by the carriers two weeks ago.

The agreement included the stringent security arrangements demanded by Israel. But according to the Transport Ministry, the Czech authorities have backed away from those measures.

El Al has standing instructions not to fly on routes where full security according to Israeli standards is lacking. As a result, the new service was suspended until assurances are received from Prague in this regard, the ministry said.