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LIKUD-LED GOVERNMENT SURVIVES VOTE OF CONFIDENCE BY COMFORTABLE MARGIN

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Nov. 5 (JTA) -- Israel's Likud-led government survived a vote of confidence in the Knesset on Monday by a relatively comfortable margin of 57-50 with two abstentions, after a day of behind-the-scenes drama involving two Orthodox parties.

The vote was called on seven motions, submitted by Labor and other opposition parties, assailing the government's handling of the immigrant absorption process. The motions alleged that the various government ministries dealing with absorption are uncoordinated, placing the historic wave of immigration in jeopardy.

Last month, the government survived a motion of no confidence in its foreign policy by a mere two votes because of opposition within the far-right Moledet party and failure to win support from the entire religious bloc. This time there were no such defections.

Labor Chairman Shimon Peres had met privately over the weekend with the Hasidic rabbis of Vishnitz and Sadagora, in an effort to court the Agudat Yisrael party's votes and deter it from joining the Likud government, which it has supported while officially remaining in the opposition.

Separately, Labor made secret contacts with Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, spiritual leader of the Shas party, which is a part of the Likud-led coalition. There was a stretch of hours Monday when it seemed the Sephardic sage would instruct Shas' five members vote against the government.

Shas has been threatening to quit the government because of the ongoing police investigation of one of its leaders, Interior Minister Arye Deri, who is accused of misappropriating funds.

Sharon Criticizes Labor Party

But during an afternoon meeting at Yosef's home, the rabbi ordered party members to support the government.

Deri said later he had been instrumental in persuading Yosef and his other colleagues "not to cause political chaos at this time of grave security and diplomatic challenges for Israel."

But Deri said "the majority" in the party still wants to quit the government. He hinted there might be further crises if the five-month old police investigation were not ended.

Deri said he had argued that to bring down the government now, when the end of the inquiry was in sight, would be interpreted as a move by Shas to thwart the orderly process of law.

Agudat Yisrael's executive was meeting in Jerusalem during the Knesset debate, to discuss the Likud's terms for the party's joining the government. The party's Knesset members absented themselves from the chamber for the vote.

During the debate, Housing Minister Ariel Sharon castigated Labor for "throwing stones on those who seek to build stone upon stone" to house the Soviet immigrants. "How will you recount this to you grandchildren?" he asked.

Avraham Shohat of Labor said that expectations of a successful aliyah were turning into a disaster as the government failed to implement a coordinated absorption policy.

OCTOBER IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL HITS RECORD NUMBER 20,000 SOVIETS

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Nov. 5 (JTA) -- A total of 20,324 Soviet Jews immigrated to Israel in October, a record number for the fifth consecutive month, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry has reported.

In addition, 290 Soviet Jews arrived in the United States directly from Moscow in October, according to the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

In addition to the Soviets, 840 immigrants from other countries arrived in Israel last month.

Since the beginning of the year, 121,752 Soviet Jews have arrived in Israel through the end of October, the highest annual number of immigrants to Israel since the nation's early days.

And the record figures are expected to rise. In Jerusalem, Israeli Absorption Minister Yitzhak Peretz has forecast that 75,000 immigrants will arrive in the next two months.

Quoting "a senior aliyah official," Peretz told the Cabinet's ministerial committee on aliyah Sunday that between 300,000 and 400,000 Jews are expected to arrive in 1991.

"The Jews in the Soviet Union feel they had better do it today, or they may not be able to do it tomorrow," Peretz told reporters at the end of a meeting of the committee. "Soviet Jews lack a feeling of security."

In addition, Soviet Jews continue to immigrate to other countries, with assistance from the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, which helps Soviet emigres in Rome and Vienna, in addition to those who arrive directly from Moscow.

In Rome, 91 Soviet Jews were waiting to emigrate as of the end of last week. Of that number, seven are bound for the United States, 67 for Canada and 17 for Australia.

Also in Rome were 61 Iranian Jews, all of them bound for the United States.

In Vienna, as of the end of last week, 429 Jews were being processed by HIAS, of whom 139 were Soviet Jews. Of the group, 67 were bound for West Germany, 42 for Canada, 25 for Australia and five for the United States.

There were also 229 Iranians in Vienna, the vast majority of them bound for the United States, with four going to Canada. The remainder of the Jews being processed in Vienna as of last week were Eastern European Jews.

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

WORLD JEWRY BEING ASKED TO RAISE \$1.3 BILLION MORE FOR SOVIET JEWS

By Charles Hoffman

JERUSALEM, Nov. 5 (JTA) -- The Jewish Agency Board of Governors has called on world Jewry to raise another \$1.3 billion over the next three to five years to pay the cost of bringing 1 million Soviet Jews to Israel.

This sum is in addition to the \$600 million already being raised for Soviet aliyah in the worldwide Operation Exodus campaign mounted by the United Jewish Appeal in the United States and in other countries by Keren Hayesod.

The call for additional funds was made last

Thursday at the conclusion of the weeklong Board of Governors meeting here. Mendel Kaplan, who chairs the board, said "unconventional ways" would have to be found to raise the money, which the Jewish Agency needs to bring the immigrants and their belongings to Israel.

Over 200,000 Soviet Jews are expected to make aliyah during the 1990-91 fiscal year, and similar numbers are expected in the years following, said Simcha Dinits, chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive.

In New York, UJA President Stanley Horowitz on Monday welcomed the challenge of helping raise the additional \$1.3 billion.

"We've known for some time that Israel is expecting 1 million Soviet Jews, so it doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that very, very substantial money would be involved," he said.

"We feel privileged to have the opportunity to take part in this rescue operation. Every Jew understands the historic nature of this opportunity, and we are very optimistic about finding the right combination of programs to make these funds available."

Planning To Begin Within Weeks

Horowitz said the planning process for a new campaign has not yet begun, but he expects to assemble the necessary committee "within the next few weeks." The fund-raising strategy will be hammered out "over the next several months," he said.

Horowitz's faith in the ability of the American Jewish community to raise the requested sums of money is rooted in the success of the Operation Exodus campaign.

As of this week, 90 percent of UJA's \$420 million Operation Exodus goal has been achieved, and UJA recently sent \$130 million in cash from the campaign to the Jewish Agency.

"We know that the Operation Exodus campaign has been only the first phase. We know we have our work cut out for us," Horowitz said.

In Jerusalem, Kaplan said that an "Exodus II" campaign would eventually be launched, but that only part of the extra \$1.3 billion needed would be raised through philanthropy. "We are now looking for other financial instruments to be provided by Diaspora Jews," he said, without elaborating.

For the first time, an international task force of Jewish financiers was convened by the Jewish Agency last week in Jerusalem, to develop new ways of financing the costs of the Soviet aliyah and absorption to be borne by the agency and the Israeli government.

It has been estimated that the long-term absorption costs for 1 million immigrants will be between \$25 billion and \$30 billion.

Members of the task force include the leaders of the United Jewish Appeal, Keren Hayesod and Israel Bonds, and such philanthropists as Max Fisher of Detroit, Charles Bronfman and Albert Reichman of Canada, and Ezra Safran of Geneva.

Dinits said this task force, convened with the blessing of the Israeli government, will examine sources of funding such as loans, investments and grants by foreign governments.

Dinits also reported that the Jewish Agency now has the capacity to move some 50,000 Soviet immigrants each month through various transit points in Eastern Europe, the main ones being Budapest, Warsaw and Bucharest, Romania.

(JTA staff writer Debra Nussbaum Cohen in New York contributed to this report.)

ETHIOPIAN PLEDGE OF FREE EMIGRATION RAISES DOUBT AMONG GROUPS CONCERNED By Andrew Goldsmith

NEW YORK, Nov. 5 (JTA) -- Israeli officials and Jewish groups working on behalf of Ethiopian Jewry have cast doubt on an Ethiopian government official's claim that all Jews in his country are now free to leave for Israel.

Emigration had been averaging about 500 Ethiopian Jews per month until this summer, when it dropped suddenly and sharply. Only about 200 were permitted to leave from July through August and fewer than 200 left in September.

Meanwhile, the number of Ethiopian Jews stranded in the capital city of Addis Ababa reportedly has reached 22,000. Most left their homes in the northern province of Gondar with the expectation they would be allowed to emigrate.

Last week, Kassa Kebede, an Ethiopian government official who has held talks with Israeli officials, told The New York Times his country had agreed to resume the emigration flow. He said an accord had been reached with the Israeli government during talks last month.

But in Washington, an Israeli official said, "We have no knowledge of such an agreement between the two governments."

"Lately, several high-level contacts between the two countries have tried to resolve some misunderstandings with regard to the Jewish immigration to Israel as part of family reunion and other pending bilateral issues," the official said.

"We hope that those contacts will eventually bring satisfactory arrangements, which will remove all delay from the process of reuniting families."

Abraham Bayer, director of international concerns for the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, also said he had been informed that "the Israeli government does not know of any such agreement with Ethiopia as having been concluded."

'Rehash Of Old Promises'

"We have heard reports that the emigration rate is going to increase, but we have no information confirming those reports at this time," said John Hall, country officer for Ethiopia at the State Department. "We'll wait and see."

William Recant, executive director of the American Association for Ethiopian Jews, described the Ethiopian official's announcement as a "rehash of old promises."

But he added, "We have been led to believe that there will be a change and levels (of emigration) will return to the springtime numbers of 500 to 600 a month."

Even if that turns out to be the case, it will not be sufficient. "At that rate," he said, "it will take three years for all of them to emigrate."

According to Barbara Ribakove Gordon, director of the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry, the 22,000 Jews in Addis Ababa are living in very difficult conditions. "They are living in hovels, without sanitation, water and heat," she said.

Gordon said that efforts are being made to improve conditions. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has improved medical care and distributed blankets, and the North American Conference has provided clothing for virtually every Jewish child in need.

(JTA correspondent David Friedman in Washington contributed to this report.)

**U.S. RESPONDS COOLLY TO REPORTS
THAT LIBYA HAS EXPELLED ABUL ABBAS****By David Friedman**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 5 (JTA) -- The State Department has responded coolly to reports that Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi has expelled 145 members of the Palestine Liberation Front and closed four of its training camps.

Richard Boucher, the department's deputy spokesman, said Monday that the United States would welcome such a development "if it were true." But he said there are many other terrorist groups being sheltered in Libya.

The expulsion, which had been rumored during the last week, was confirmed Sunday in Baghdad by Mohammed (Abul) Abbas, the leader of one of the factions of the PLF, a constituent group of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Abbas masterminded the October 1985 hijacking of the cruise ship Achille Lauro and an unsuccessful raid on Tel Aviv beaches in May.

Boucher said the expulsion does not mean Libya has ended its support of the Abul Abbas group. "Moreover Libya still provides support to a number of other terrorists groups, including the notorious Abu Nidal organization, which in fact is still headquartered in Tripoli," he said.

Boucher said Abu Nidal has been increasing his ties with Iraq while continuing to have his headquarters in Libya. Abbas has been based in Iraq since 1982.

**SOLDIERS AND POLICE FROM IRAQ
SAID TO HAVE TRAINED IN GERMANY****By David Kantor**

BONN, Nov. 5 (JTA) -- Iraqi soldiers and police reportedly were trained in Germany in recent years, according to parliamentary reports.

But the government, responding to questions from Parliament, declined to give precise details and denied that members of an elite German anti-terrorist unit, GSG9, were working in Iraq as Bonn's emissaries.

In fact, some members of GSG9, including its founder, Ulrich Wegener, were trained in Israel in the 1970s and have maintained good working contacts with the Israeli army ever since.

The government has been barraged by questions about its former involvement with Baghdad, and the inquiries have not stopped with Monday's visit to the Iraqi capital by former Chancellor Willy Brandt.

Responding to questions about military involvement in Iraq, the government said simply that "nine Iraqi police officers have been trained in various techniques to combat crime."

But the government did confirm that a former chief of West German counterintelligence, Klaus Kinkel, had offered the Iraqi interior minister six guns as a gift, supposedly intended for the Iraqi minister's private collection.

Almost daily, new details emerge here about the deep involvement of both Germans in helping Iraqi militarily. But the government has largely succeeded in avoiding making this an important issue in the present election campaign.

The government simply responds that it has no knowledge of alleged illegal provisions of chemical weapons or military materiel to Iraq.

It was reported Monday that the German chemical industry made available millions of dollars to pay for baby food and medicine that Brandt took to Baghdad.

**ISRAEL SEEKING MORE AID FROM U.S.
TO MEET HIGH COSTS OF GULF CRISIS****By Hugh Orgel**

TEL AVIV, Nov. 5 (JTA) -- Israel is seeking more U.S. aid to help it meet the high costs of military preparedness for war in the Persian Gulf, Defense Minister Moshe Arens said Monday.

Addressing a luncheon meeting of the Israel-U.S. Chamber of Commerce here, Arens said he had told U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney that Israel will need an additional \$2.5 billion in U.S. military aid.

Since the Gulf crisis began in August, Israel has incurred costs of nearly \$1 billion by calling up reserves and deploying forces.

Israel is to receive \$1.8 million in U.S. military aid this fiscal year, which began Oct. 1, and will be allowed this year to use an additional \$200 million in U.S. economic aid for military purposes.

Israel is also designated to receive \$700 million in excess U.S. weaponry being "drawn down" from Western Europe and to have its stockpile of U.S. munitions doubled from \$100 million to \$200 million.

Arens spoke as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, on his current tour of the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia, told American troops that the Gulf crisis had entered a new stage in which military action against Iraq appeared more likely than before.

On his arrival in Saudi Arabia, he said that Washington continued to strive for peace through diplomatic means, but the U.S. must prepare for the use of force.

**RABIN PLANNED TO MEET SECRETLY
WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN, SAYS PAPER****By David Landau**

JERUSALEM, Nov. 5 (JTA) -- Plans were made and then unmade last year to bring Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and former Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin together in a secret meeting, according to a report in Monday's edition of Ha'aretz.

The efforts to bring the two men together -- after both agreed in principle to meet -- eventually foundered and were followed by Hussein's public saber rattling against Israel.

The story was reported exclusively in Ha'aretz by its veteran military correspondent, Ze'ev Schiff.

The middlemen in the plans, according to Schiff, were Israeli-American businessman Azriel Einav, who is close to the Labor Party, and an American businessman described as "one of the leaders of the oil industry and the head of a major bank, a man of Arab origin."

Rabin, according to the report, refused to confirm or deny the account, and Eitan Haber, at the time Rabin's aide at the Defense Ministry, said, "Yes there was something like that," but refused to elaborate.

The U.S. oil magnate met with Rabin secretly in a hotel in Philadelphia, using a service elevator to get to Rabin's suite in order to avoid reporters.

Schiff writes that the American briefed the White House on the upcoming meeting, which was twice scheduled for secret venues in Europe -- but twice put off by the Iraqi side.

Rabin is said to have felt that every avenue that could lead to peace should be explored.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES:

IN BRATISLAVA, THE SHUL IS NO LONGER, BUT JEWISH LIFE HAS TAKEN ROOT AGAIN
By Ruth E. Gruber

BRATISLAVA, Czechoslovakia (JTA) -- As dusk begins to fall on an autumn Friday, a handful of elderly people make their way, one by one, into the sole synagogue in Bratislava, capital of Czechoslovakia's Slovak republic.

They take scattered places around the large sanctuary of the building, a striking, somewhat Art Deco design from the 1920s, whose outer facade is covered with scaffolding but whose airy interior, with an eye-catching wrought iron central bimah and distinctive hanging metal chandeliers, is well maintained.

There is no rabbi to lead the service--there is no rabbi in Bratislava -- so as soon as there is a minyan, the group, eventually about 25 people, drifts into prayer, led by one member of the congregation.

The beautiful, almost cantorial voice of one of the elderly worshippers from time to time soars up over the murmur of davening -- and shmoozing -- in the aisles.

This is one face of Judaism in Bratislava, once a major Jewish center and now home to a community estimated at about 1,000.

Two hours later, another face is revealed.

In the shabby but bright kosher restaurant and community hall half a mile away from the shul, a group of vibrant young Slovak students are practicing Israeli dances as a steady stream of people of all ages begin filtering into the hall to take places at seats and tables.

The crush of people eventually forces the students to abandon their rehearsal, and soon a standing-room-only crowd of 200 people or so is crammed into the hall, which is decorated with pictures of Golda Meir and Menachem Schneerson, the Lubavitcher rebbe.

Always A Capacity Crowd

It is the bimonthly meeting of the Jewish Forum, a cultural and educational program aimed at introducing Slovak Jews to their own history as well as to Jewish culture and history in general, including the Holocaust and World War II.

Slovakia, which in 1918 became federated with the Czech Republic as Czechoslovakia, was a fascist, pro-Nazi puppet state during World War II. About 75,000 out of its prewar population of 90,000 Jews perished in the Holocaust.

The Jewish Forum, crowded to capacity at every meeting, was set up this past year in the wake of the "Velvet Revolution" that ousted the Communists from power last November.

Under the Communists, such cultural and religious Jewish education was forbidden, and the practice of all religions, not just Judaism, was strictly controlled by the state.

"The revolution opened the door," says Ludovit Dojc, a retired school teacher and expert in Slovak Jewish history who gives regular talks to forum members.

Tonight he explains to the crowd how two days later Bratislava will become "a little Jerusalem" when Hasidic pilgrims from Israel and other countries will come to pray at the underground mausoleum of the Chassam Sofer on the great 19th-century sage's 150th yahrzeit.

The audience listens intently to the elderly Dojc's quiet voice. His talk is only one of several during the nearly three-hour program.

A Jewish community officer reports on his meeting with local government officials, who assured him they would combat an apparent recent upsurge of anti-Semitic vandalism -- anti-Jewish slogans scrawled on walls and the like.

A history professor -- "perhaps not Jewish, you know," someone whispers -- gives a lecture on various aspects of Slovak Jewish history.

'More Cultural Than Religious'

Two young political activists address the audience on the need to combat militant nationalism and announce plans for a demonstration against nationalism to be staged the next week.

The Jewish Forum moderator, Dr. Pavol Traubner, a jovial bearded physician, presents someone with a bouquet of flowers to mark his 50th birthday.

Everybody gets enthusiastic applause.

Later, Juraj Reich, president of the Union of Slovak Jewish Communities, enthuses about the forum. "It's good that the young people come," he says. "Of course it's more a cultural than a religious thing."

Two days later, history teacher Dojc is at the Chassam Sofer's mausoleum by 10 a.m., and the first pilgrims are already wrapped in intense prayers at the sage's subterranean tomb. Two young women weep openly as they pray.

As the morning draws on, more and more pilgrims arrive. Most are Hasidim, but local Jews, too, come to pray.

The mausoleum is one of the most remarkable Jewish monuments in Czechoslovakia. From the outside, it looks like part of a bus stop on the main traffic artery along the Danube River, a little glass booth with a trap door grill inside.

One descends a narrow flight of stairs into another world: a low-ceiling, buried room containing 60 weathered tombstones. Many of them are arranged around the walls. In the center of the room, a raised platform of earth contains the graves of 23 people, including eight rabbis.

The underground tomb is all that remains of Bratislava's Old Jewish cemetery, in use from 1670-1847. Once it was at ground level, along the Danube. It was buried in the 19th century, when the Danube was redirected in a major river regulation project.

There are, however, two still-existing Jewish cemeteries located on a hill directly above the mausoleum.

Destroyed By The Communists

Except for the synagogue and the cemeteries, most other physical traces of Jewish life in Bratislava have been destroyed -- either during World War II or by the Communists.

There is still a street called Zidovska, or Jewish Street. It runs alongside the crosstown freeway, which, along with a big bridge across the Danube, was built about 20 years ago by the Communist authorities, in a huge urban renewal project that destroyed large tracts of the historic old town in the process.

One of the victims of the highway was the elaborate, twin-domed main synagogue, once a city landmark. Only since last year's revolution has the synagogue been allowed to be remembered.

On the site where it once stood, just next to the highway, young people have painted a big picture of it on the pavement.

"Here there used to stand a synagogue!" they have written.