

VOL. 68 - 73rd YEAR

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1990

NO. 219

**BUSH PLAN TO MEET WITH ASSAD  
DISAPPOINTS U.S. JEWISH LEADER**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- A top American Jewish leader expressed surprise and disappointment Wednesday at news that President Bush is planning to meet with Syrian President Hafez Assad during his current trip to Europe and the Middle East.

"It's very troubling and incomprehensible to those who support the president's stated goals in the Persian Gulf," said Seymour Reich, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Such a meeting "invites cynicism" toward Bush's attempt "to maintain the high moral ground in his efforts to unite the world in fighting the naked aggression of (Iraqi leader) Saddam Hussein," Reich said.

The meeting, to be held in Geneva, was announced by White House Spokesman Marlin Fitzwater aboard Air Force One. The president was en route from Paris to Saudi Arabia, where he will spend the Thanksgiving Day holiday with U.S. troops.

Fitzwater said the meeting was urged by Egypt and Turkey, the two staunchest allies of the United States in the multinational force opposing Iraq's seizure of Kuwait.

"What price the coalition?" commented Reich. "Syria is a sponsor of terrorism and terrorist groups that were involved in the bombing of Pan Am 103."

He was referring to the fact that Syria is the base of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, which is believed responsible for the December 1988 bombing of the American airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland. A total of 270 people died in the disaster, including several Americans.

Reich said that Secretary of State James Baker's meeting with Assad in Damascus last month should "have been enough to keep Syria in the coalition."

"The irony of it all is that Assad is the archenemy of Saddam Hussein and needs the United States more than we need him."

Assad's last meeting with a U.S. president was in 1977, when he met in Geneva with Jimmy Carter.

**U.N. ENVOY WON'T BE SENT TO ISRAEL  
UNTIL AFTER SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION**  
By Aliza Marcus

UNITED NATIONS, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar is expected to send a personal envoy to Israel, but probably not until the Security Council has finished debating a resolution calling for U.N. military observers to be deployed in the administered territories.

Israel had originally hoped its offer to receive a U.N. envoy would forestall further moves against the Jewish state in the Security Council.

Although Perez de Cuellar issued a statement Tuesday evening saying he was only considering sending his personal representative, Jean-Claude

Aime, Israeli and U.S. officials are assuming the visit will take place shortly.

This was buttressed Wednesday, when Perez de Cuellar told reporters he was going to discuss an exact date for the envoy's visit with Israel's U.N. ambassador, Yoram Aridor.

Israeli President Chaim Herzog, who met with Perez de Cuellar at noon here, also announced that the secretary-general had accepted an invitation to visit Israel, Israeli officials said.

The invitation was extended during the meeting the two held in Japan at the coronation of Emperor Akihito, officials said.

**Feels A Visit 'Might Be Useful'**

Perez de Cuellar issued a statement Tuesday evening concerning the visit of his envoy, after news reports from France quoted Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy as saying the secretary-general had agreed to accept Israel's two-week-old offer to receive a lone envoy.

"The secretary-general is considering favorably the idea of sending his representative, Jean-Claude Aime, to Israel and the occupied territories," said the statement. "The secretary-general continues to be deeply concerned about the situation in the occupied territories and accordingly feels a visit by his envoy might be useful."

But the statement also said the visit would probably take place after Security Council consultations concerning Israel had finished.

This leaves open the question of whether Aime's visit will satisfy council members trying to pass another resolution criticizing Israel for, among other things, refusing to cooperate with a U.N. investigation of last month's riots on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

"It must be recalled that the secretary-general does not as a rule intervene in matters with which the Security Council is seized," the statement said. "He would not want to prejudice the deliberations or outcomes of the discussion that is taking place in the Security Council at present."

**Concern About Proposed Resolution**

Israel faces potential trouble from the Security Council on a resolution introduced last Friday by four non-aligned members. It calls for U.N. observers now stationed in Jerusalem to be deployed in the administered territories to monitor the situation and report back to the Security Council.

Debate on the resolution is expected to start up again Friday. It seems unlikely to pass, now that Israel's offer has apparently been accepted.

But if the resolution does pass, it is unlikely to be implemented, since it is virtually impossible to move observers from the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization without the agreement of the host country.

Some observers here say there is support for calling a meeting of the 164 signatories of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which states that civilians living in occupied territories must be afforded safety and protection.

Israel has signed the convention but does not accept its legal applicability to the administered territories, although it says it abides by the convention's humanitarian guidelines.

## HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS HAIL CSCE FINAL CHARTER

NEW YORK, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- Human rights activists have hailed the Final Charter adopted at the Paris meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe this week.

Its specificity on a wide range of human rights concerns was welcomed by Denis Braham, vice chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, who attended the meeting and met with representatives of some of the 34 participating nations.

Braham, who chairs his organization's CSCE Monitoring Committee, cited the charter's provisions with respect to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and the rights of minorities.

He said he was especially impressed by the signatories' "determination to combat racial and ethnic hatred and anti-Semitism, and their declaration of irrevocable respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."

National Conference Chairwoman Shoshana Cardin said, "As an active participant in monitoring the CSCE human rights process from its inception, we call upon the signatories to insure implementation of the document."

"We are gratified to note the determination of the CSCE member nations to expand the human dimension mechanism. In this regard, we hope that all human rights organizations will have freedom of access to the 1991 Moscow CSCE Conference on the Human Dimension," she said.

The original Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe convened in 1973 and concluded at the 1975 Helsinki summit, attended by the heads of states and government of 33 European nations, the United States and Canada.

### Religious Freedom Included

The Final Act of Aug. 1, 1975, also known as the Helsinki Accords, is a statement of principles committing states to standards of conduct toward their own citizens as well as toward other states.

The CSCE process was continued at subsequent meetings in various European capitals over the last 15 years.

Monitoring groups known as Helsinki Watch committees swiftly called attention to human rights violations by signatory nations. That was especially true during the long period of struggle for the rights of Soviet Jews, including their right to emigrate.

The Final Charter states that "human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all human beings, are inalienable and guaranteed by law. Their protection and promotion is the first responsibility of government. Respect for them is an essential safeguard against an overmighty state. Their observance and full exercise are the foundation of freedom, justice and peace."

The declaration affirms the universal right to "freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief; freedom of expression; freedom of association; and peaceful assembly and freedom of movement."

It specifies that "no one will be subject to arbitrary arrest or detention," that "the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities will be protected" and that national minorities "have the right to freely express, preserve and develop that identity without any discrimination and in full equality before the law."

## FEDERATIONS TO CONTINUE 'FAIR SHARE' PROGRAM FOR SETTTLING SOVIET EMIGRES

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- Leaders of Jewish community federations across the United States have agreed to continue funding the resettlement of Soviet Jews in this country in a way that distributes the financial responsibility among all Jewish communities.

The agreement on collective responsibility, adopted last week during the Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly in San Francisco, essentially renews an accord reached last February in Miami, at a meeting convened specifically to deal with resettlement issues.

Under the plan, each federation is responsible for settling a specific number of emigres, determined by the size of the community and the amount of money it raised during its 1989 general fund-raising campaign.

If the community does not settle that number, it must contribute \$1,000 to a national pool for each Soviet Jew it does not absorb. The money in the national pool is then distributed to the communities resettling more than their "fair share" of Soviet immigrants.

The collective responsibility program was developed, "because Jewish tradition has always linked communities together," explained Bernard Olshansky, CJF assistant executive vice president.

"We live in a continental society, and there was a need to recognize the responsibility beyond our individual communities, to make it a cooperative effort," he said.

### 121 Communities Participated

A total of 121 communities participated in the program this past year, out of about 141 that were eligible to do so, and CJF executives hope that more will take part next year.

Those U.S. federations that did not participate chose not to because "some of the smaller communities felt that they couldn't afford it," according to Jerry Levinrad, CJF director of refugee resettlement programs.

In fact, the collective responsibility program has proven to be most beneficial for the smaller communities, Levinrad said, making it easier for them to accept refugees and to increase their Jewish population.

The small communities are the least likely to have settled Soviet Jews during the last big wave of immigration, in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

And relatively few of the recent immigrants went to smaller communities, because nearly all of them had family members already living in larger communities here.

But now more U.S. visas are going to Soviet Jews without family members here, who, without the family support system waiting for them, cost more to resettle.

"This system encourages communities to take on more of those cases, so they will not have to put money into the kitty," Levinrad explained.

The Fair Share Formula for Equitable Collective Responsibility, as it is formally known, also "allows some communities with very small populations to increase their populations by comparatively large percentages, as much as 4 or 5 percent," Levinrad said.

The delegates in San Francisco also voted to create a leadership committee to report on all aspects of collective responsibility at next year's General Assembly in Baltimore.

**TENSIONS ERUPT OVER PLAN TO HOUSE SOVIET JEWS IN HEAVILY ARAB AREA****By Gil Sedan**

JERUSALEM, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- Potential for confrontation loomed Wednesday over plans to house newly arrived Soviet immigrants in the middle of an Arab city.

Tension ran high in Nazareth, the largest Arab city in Israel, after Housing Minister Ariel Sharon announced he was determined to push ahead with a plan to settle 1,400 newcomers from the Soviet Union in an army camp in the middle of an Arab-populated area.

Residents of the adjacent Jewish township of Upper Nazareth think the idea is impractical, given the opposition of local Arabs.

Authorities on the scene had decided to drop the plan, fearing clashes with the Arab community.

But Sharon declared Wednesday that the plan would go forward.

"It is unacceptable that immigrants will not be housed in Eretz Yisrael as a result of any sort of threats," he said.

The initial plan called for evacuating the soldiers in the army camp before settling immigrants there. But residents of Upper Nazareth have asked that the army remain.

Uri Shani, regional director of the housing company Amidar, promised security arrangements for the new olim.

"We have no other choice," he said. "We must find those immigrants proper housing."

**PROGRAM PROPOSED TO ENCOURAGE SOVIET ENGINEERS TO STAY IN ISRAEL****By Hugh Orgel**

JERUSALEM, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- The Association of Engineers and Architects in Israel is proposing a \$100 million program to establish jobs for the estimated 120,000 engineers expected to immigrate here from the Soviet Union.

The goal is to deter emigres from leaving the country in pursuit of more lucrative jobs abroad.

At least 80 percent of highly skilled Soviet olim would not find jobs in their profession in Israel under existing circumstances, according to Shmuel Sorek, association chairman.

He said the figure of 120,000, based on the expectation that over 1 million Soviet Jews will immigrate here in the next five years, is triple the number of engineers presently in Israel.

Many of the newcomers were trained and are experienced in branches of engineering not found in Israel. They will have to be retrained, Sorek said.

He said that "head-hunters," or recruiters, mainly from the United States, are already in Israel trying to hire qualified engineers and other specialists unable to find jobs here.

In order to keep the Soviet Jews from leaving, Israel will have to offer higher-than-average salaries, Sorek said. But the association would make that inducement conditional on improved productivity.

The association also called for the establishment of "engineering centers" where groups of new immigrant engineers and scientists would be encouraged to develop state-of-the-art products and designs for sale abroad.

The association estimates the cost of its program in excess of \$100 million.

**WORSENING ECONOMY SPARKS LAYOFFS AT ISRAELI DAILIES AND AT AIRPORT****By Hugh Orgel**

TEL AVIV, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- Growing numbers of Israelis are being laid off their jobs as a declining economy and fears for safety are causing many enterprises to cut back.

Newspapers seem to be especially hard hit, with job losses and reduced editions reported at the Jerusalem Post and Hadashot.

The Post, Israel's only English-language daily, will lay off 60 employees because of advertising and circulation losses, Israel Radio reported Wednesday.

The cuts will come from the editorial, administrative and press departments.

More than 60 Post employees were fired last year for economic reasons after the paper was placed under new management following its acquisition by a foreign chain. An additional 30 editorial staffers quit in protest against new editorial and managerial policies.

Now the Post may drop the weekly regional magazines distributed with its weekend editions in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. They may be incorporated into the Friday supplement.

Hadashot, an independent Hebrew daily owned by the family that publishes Ha'aretz, has dismissed an undisclosed number of employees and reduced the number of special editions.

The severe slump in tourism has caused the Airport Authority to let go some 300 employees at Ben-Gurion Airport, where passenger traffic has been down sharply in recent months.

The money-losing airport has postponed development work, including the installation of new lighting and air-conditioning systems.

The prestigious Israel Museum has also been forced to cut back, because of a drop in visitors.

Israelis and foreigners alike are staying away from Jerusalem because of the recent wave of knife assaults on Jews by Arabs.

**NO MORE TAX BREAK FOR OLIM****By Gil Sedan**

JERUSALEM, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- Immigrants from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries will soon receive cash grants instead of the usual tax exemptions for electrical appliances given to new olim, customs authorities said this week.

The grants will be the cash equivalent of the exemptions. Effective Dec. 1, each immigrant family will receive a \$2,500 electrical appliance grant. The family will get \$750 on arrival at Ben-Gurion Airport, the rest to be paid at the end of their first year in Israel.

The substitution of cash for a tax exemption was explained as a way to discourage immigrants from buying appliances they do not need in order to preserve their exemption rights.

New immigrants to Israel generally receive a two-year exemption from the payment of value-added tax, which can double the price for veteran Israelis of electrical goods or luxury items, such as cars or musical instruments.

The grant is in addition to the \$9,000 given to each immigrant family in what is called an "absorption basket" to help them through their first year in the country.

A third of the absorption basket is paid upon arrival in Israel and the balance in monthly installments of \$500.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:  
1,000 SHLICHIM COME TOGETHER  
TO TELL OF WORLDWIDE MISSION  
By Debra Nussbaum Cohen**

NEW YORK, Nov. 21 (JTA) -- As the thoughtful gaze of the Lubavitcher rebbe looked down from a giant poster over the dais at the front of the room, a thousand men dressed in black hats, black suits, white shirts and beards sang and danced, listened to exhortations to continue their work with joy and dedication and talked about the challenges of being Lubavitcher shlichim, or emissaries.

The shlichim can be found in almost every corner of the world: Casablanca, Morocco; Hong Kong; Asuncion, Paraguay; Salzburg, Austria; Bombay, India; and in the United States from New Hampshire to Alaska, Alabama to Nevada.

All told, they number 3,000 people, including wives, in 40 states and 33 countries.

The timing of their annual convention in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, site of the worldwide Lubavitch headquarters, was significant, according to Rabbi Shmuel Butman, director of the Lubavitch Youth Organization.

"The rebbe says every shaliach is like a menorah," Butman said, "and today is the first day of Kislev, the month of Chanukah and the menorah."

Putting the ritual eight-flamed lamp in the window to announce to all who pass by that it is a Jewish home is part of the Chanukah tradition.

Chabad shlichim serve the same function, as they establish a presence and ignite the flame of a traditional Jewish community where previously there was none.

Rabbi Yehoshua Harlig is just now setting out for Las Vegas, where, he says jokingly, his motto will be, "When the chips are down, come to Chabad."

**No Longer City Of Sin**

All kidding aside, he insists that the gambling and show-girl paradise is no longer the "city of sin" it once was, now that the legendary days of Jewish pit bosses are just about over.

There are about 25,000 Jews in Las Vegas, out of a population of about 800,000. Many are former Californians who already know about Chabad, and who went to Las Vegas to buy cheap real estate. They went to Las Vegas to escape many things, including Judaism.

Harlig, who at age 28 has already spent time in India, Scandinavia and Hong Kong learning the shaliach's craft, has decided that his first project in Las Vegas will be writing a Torah.

A sofer, or scribe, from Los Angeles has been commissioned to complete all but the last few lines, which will be filled in next summer in Las Vegas.

Local Jews will sponsor each of the last letters of the Torah, which will be filled out in the community.

"Creating a Torah is the last mitzvah, the 613th in the Torah," Harlig said, and the project is sure "to unite all the Jews of Las Vegas."

Honolulu, home to about 10,000 Jews including Rabbi Yitzhok Krasniansky and his family, also attracts Jews "who want to get away from structured Jewish life," he says.

The tan he sported at the November meeting stood out in the room full of pale faces, and attested to the fact that Jewish life in Honolulu is different than it is in most other places.

His home is half a block from the beach, and because there is no mikvah in Hawaii, his wife uses the Pacific for the ritual bath.

Then there's Rabbi Yehudah Raskin, who despite having been in Casablanca for the last 31 years, has never had a drink at Rick's Cafe.

Morocco, a country rich with Jewish history, had 300,000 Jews when Raskin first arrived. But now only 10,000 remain in Morocco, about 7,000 of them in Casablanca, and some in Fez, the birthplace of Maimonides.

The rest have mostly gone to Israel, he said.

Despite the small size of the community, Raskin finds that the relationship between the Jewish community and the Arab Moroccan community is a good one, aided by the fact that "King Hassan is a good king. He helps us," the rabbi said. "People there have a lot of respect for rabbis."

**'Like A Soldier'**

It is not easy being in a place so far removed from most of the Jewish world, but when Raskin left, he did not dwell on the challenges he would have to contend with. "I was like a soldier who went to the army," he remembers.

Rabbi Eliezer Shemtov has lived in Montevideo, Uruguay, for the last five years. There, the community consists of 20,000 people of mostly German, Hungarian, Polish and Turkish ancestry.

The president of Uruguay, Luis Alberto Lacalle, is a devout Catholic, but has told Shemtov that his great-grandparents were Marranos.

And, according to Shemtov, Lacalle has sought out the counsel of the Lubavitcher rebbe, Menachem Schneerson. Last year, before the Uruguayan elections, when Lacalle was a senator and a presidential candidate, he called Shemtov and told him he wanted to meet with the rebbe.

Shemtov arranged the meeting. When Lacalle got to New York, he was waiting in his Manhattan hotel for a car to pick him up and take him to Crown Heights. But because of heavy traffic, the car was extremely late. So Lacalle caught a cab, which, once over the bridge into Brooklyn, got caught in the traffic.

Lacalle got out of the car, and with an aide, according to Shemtov, jogged through Brooklyn so that he would not miss meeting with the rebbe.

**Two Dollars For Charity**

When he got there, the rebbe gave Lacalle two dollar bills to give to charity.

When Lacalle returned to Uruguay, he was trailing in the polls, but by the time the votes were all counted, he had won by 7 percent of the vote, "a very important, mystical number in Judaism," Shemtov pointed out, alluding to the rebbe's influence in such supernatural matters.

At the end of the dinner, when the master of ceremonies called out the communities where the shlichim are stationed, each name on the list was greeted with thunderous applause.

"New Jersey!" he cried, and three tables full of men with black hats, long beards and grinning faces stood up. "Australia!" he yelled, and the room reverberated with applause.

But when he announced "Russia" and "Eretz Yisrael," all 1,000 men broke out cheering, and the room filled with the sound of the Russian song, "There is Nothing Besides God, and We Are Not Afraid of Anyone."

**REMINDER: The JTA Daily News Bulletin will not be published Friday, Nov. 23.**