

**SOVIETS IMPOSING NEW OBSTACLES
TO JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM USSR**

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, April 3 (JTA) -- The emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union has slowed down in recent months, in part because of new obstacles imposed by Soviet authorities, according to American Jewish organizations assisting Soviet Jews.

As a result, Soviet Jewish immigration to the United States could fall "substantially short" of the 40,000 Jews originally expected to arrive this fiscal year under the U.S. refugee program, according to Karl Zukerman, executive vice president of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, or HIAS, which assists Jews immigrating here.

The new obstacles could also reduce the flow of Soviet emigres to Israel, though the impact is not expected to be as great, since far more Soviet Jews are going there to begin with, and different emigration procedures are involved, officials say.

The uneven flow of Soviet Jews to the United States this year has already had a negative impact on resettlement operations run by Jewish agencies in the United States.

One national Jewish leader even warned recently that local Jewish communities may soon begin dismantling "some of their resettlement structure" if "the current slowdown in the flow of refugees to our communities continues for much longer."

The new obstacles to Soviet Jewish emigration are also apparently serious enough that they have been raised in recent diplomatic contacts between the United States and Soviet Union.

Martin Wenick, executive director of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, outlined the major obstacles in a Feb. 26 letter to Raymond Seitz, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs.

They include processing delays and reduced hours at local offices of OVIR, the Soviet Interior Ministry agency that issues exit visas; a tightening of regulations specifying which relatives qualify for emigration on the basis of family reunification; and an increase in the number of visa refusals on the basis of such traditional impediments as alleged access to "state secrets" or eligibility for military service.

Eight- Or Nine-Month Wait

Major delays have been reported at OVIR offices in the Ukraine, Moldavia and Uzbekistan.

The local OVIR offices "are taking a very long time to give permission to Jews seeking to leave the Soviet Union for the United States who have already received permission from the United States," said Zukerman of HIAS. "The OVIR, instead of taking three to four months, is taking eight or nine."

"This delay is inhibiting the flow quite considerably, which is why we have, after half a fiscal year, just about 9,000 arrivals out of an expected 40,000 for the full fiscal year," he said.

"This leads us to believe we will run substantially short of the expected 40,000, maybe 28,000 to 30,000."

"The United States is moving at quite a

substantial rate. It is the OVIR which is inhibiting the flow," Zukerman stressed.

In his letter to Assistant Secretary of State Seitz, Wenick of the National Conference blamed the delays on the failure of Soviet authorities to devote adequate "staff resources to handle the substantially increased volume" of people applying to emigrate.

"To try to cope with the substantial increase in the number of individuals desiring to emigrate, many OVIR offices have resorted either to limiting hours for receipt of applications or to limiting the number of applications they will receive on a given day or in a given week," wrote Wenick. "This can and does result in inordinate waits before one can even submit an emigrant visa application," he wrote.

'A Deliberate Tightening-Up'

The OVIR office in the large Ukrainian city of Kiev, for instance, has recently been seeing only a trickle of people, according to Lynn Singer, executive director of the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry.

She said among the reasons given for the office's reduction in hours of operation were a shortage of paper or closing for renovations.

Although many of the delays may be due to a mounting backlog of cases, Zukerman said there is "a kind of hypothesis" that anti-Semitism lurks behind the bureaucratic snafus.

"Some people speculate it is not just a bureaucratic backlog but a deliberate tightening-up," given the reascendancy of conservative forces in the Soviet hierarchy.

Others point to recent U.S.-Soviet strains over arms control and the Kremlin's suppression of the independence movements in the Baltic republics as factors that could contribute to a slowdown in the flow of emigrants.

They note that at about the time that the political climate began to change, Soviet authorities began again strictly enforcing a requirement that those wishing to immigrate to the United States have letters of invitation from close relatives already living here.

Such invitations are also required for those going to Israel, but the definition of a close relative there has been relatively loose for some time.

The result of the tighter policy for U.S.-bound emigrants, Wenick wrote in his Feb. 26 letter, is that "extended family members desiring to depart with immediate relatives of individuals living in the United States are often also unable to submit visa applications."

Ben Zion Leuchter, president of HIAS, said the return to the prior policy of insisting on invitations from only "first-degree relatives" began suddenly a few months ago.

"Nobody knows why the policy was established," Leuchter said. But "we are concerned."

A spokesman at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, however, denied there had been a change in policy. He said he had "just picked up the invitation form and it has not changed."

In addition to the bureaucratic obstacles, there has also been a recent increase "in the number of refusals because of alleged access to state secrets," according to Wenick.

"This continues to be troubling because of

the possibility that these refusals are not based upon reality but on capriciousness," he wrote.

An official at the State Department in Washington said there were currently about 80 refuseniks left on its list of unresolved cases, "some old, some new."

Higher Resettlement Costs

Zukerman of HIAS said the State Department had recently been "very active in pressing the Soviets to agree to certain solutions" to the new emigration problems.

"There were to be conversations in Moscow this week to try to move that along," he said, but American diplomats were "asked to defer their trip" in the wake of last week's fire at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow.

American Jewish leaders have been pressing the State Department to make the emigration concerns a diplomatic priority, because of the impact on the Jewish resettlement apparatus in the United States.

Jewish community federations around the country had been mobilized to resettle 40,000 Soviet Jews this fiscal year, and so far, fewer than 10,000 have arrived.

In a March 1 letter to U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the National Conference and past president of the Council of Jewish Federations, explained that the uneven flow of Soviet Jews to the United States this year is creating "substantially increased resettlement costs to our communities."

"We are willingly prepared to make sacrifices on behalf of our brethren," she wrote, "but it is simply intolerable for us to incur substantial increased resettlement costs because of arbitrary and capricious Soviet actions."

Cardin, who is also chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, warned that if the slowdown continues, local communities would consider "dismantling some of their resettlement structure as part of a cost-saving effort."

ALLEGED COLLABORATOR IN FRANCE IS INDICTED FOR WARTIME CRIMES

PARIS, April 3 (JTA) -- An 81-year-old alleged former Nazi collaborator has been indicted for crimes against humanity. Tuesday's ruling by Judge Albert Moatty of the Paris Court of Appeals follows upon a decision last November that Rene Bousquet, who was acting minister of police during the Vichy regime, would be placed on trial, after having led a life of wealth, luxury and respect for more than 40 years.

The indictment also marks the culmination of a 10-year effort by Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld and his associates to reopen the Bousquet case in face of official reluctance and a strong tendency, even within the French Jewish community, not to resurrect a past many French would rather forget.

Bousquet, whose postwar career put him in the top echelons of French business and finance, retired some years ago, although he remains a director of the famous Baccarat crystal factory.

Those who have pursued the case against him say he owes his success to lies about his wartime activities, including a false disclaimer of involvement in the deportation of Jews to death camps and posing as a deportee.

Bousquet's strongest defense has been his claim that he assisted the French Resistance.

Allied forces who captured him in Germany in 1945 were skeptical of that.

Bousquet was jailed in France until 1948 for his role as head of the Vichy police, which rounded up Jews and deported them. But when brought to trial in 1949, he was given a symbolic sentence, which was immediately revoked in recognition of "services rendered to the Resistance" and having been a deportee.

Bousquet allegedly lied when he told the court that he "systematically refused to deal with the Jewish affairs," claiming he had "always refused to treat these issues with the Germans."

His tenure as acting police minister coincided with the police roundups of Jews in Paris between 1942 and 1943 for deportation.

Documents discovered in Nazi archives contain a memorandum Bousquet sent to his deputies all over France in August 1942, stating that "the head of the government," then Marshall Henri Petain, "wants you to personally supervise the control of the measures decided against the foreign Jews."

"You should not hesitate to break any resistance encountered within the population and to report on the officers who, by their passivity, bad will or indiscretions will have complicated your task," the acting police minister wrote.

First Major Trial Since Barbie's

In June 1944, when the Allies landed in Normandy, Bousquet fled France in the car of a high-ranking SS officer. He spent the rest of the war in a villa at Ober-Allmanhauser, where the Allied forces found him.

Bousquet posed as a deportee to explain his presence in Germany.

Ten years ago, Klarsfeld and the Association of Sons and Daughters of Deported People filed a suit against Bousquet. They specifically charged him with responsibility for the deportation of hundreds of Jewish children who perished in Nazi death camps.

The case languished, it is said, because of official apathy or Bousquet's high place in French society.

Then an attempt was made to convene a special tribunal, which would have taken an extensive amount of time to assemble. The attempt was foiled, however, with a decision to hold a trial in a regular criminal court.

The trial is the first major one for crimes against humanity since that of former Lyon Gestapo chief Klaus Barbie, who was convicted by a criminal court in 1988 and given a life sentence.

Several months ago, sources close to President Francois Mitterrand hinted that reopening the Bousquet case could "prove harmful to the civilian peace."

Infuriated, Klarsfeld, a Paris lawyer, wrote to the junior minister of justice, George Kiejman, urging him to resign rather than "accept and support this infamy."

Kiejman, who is Jewish and the son of deportees, declined to quit and in fact wrote Klarsfeld supporting the notion that "civilian peace" would be disturbed if the collaborator were brought to trial.

Other leading figures in the Jewish community agreed it was time to stop prosecuting the last surviving collaborators and to concentrate on educating the young generations.

But regardless of presumed opposition at the highest political levels, Judge Moatty decided the best way to serve justice was to apply it.

NEWS ANALYSIS:**'MODERATE' STANCE ESPOUSED BY SYRIA PRESENTS DIFFICULT CHOICES FOR ISRAEL**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 3 (JTA) -- The progression of the Middle East peace process under Washington's prodding since the end of the Persian Gulf war has confronted the Israeli government with a need to make fateful decisions it would have preferred to postpone under present circumstances.

One event greeted with caution and even trepidation in government circles here was the extensive talks in Cairo this week between two erstwhile rivals for leadership of the Arab world, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and President Hafez Assad of Syria.

Their meeting had the effect of focusing expectations on Israel to cooperate more substantively in the U.S.-led peace initiative.

Reports and commentaries from Cairo after Assad left said the two Arab leaders sought a common position vis-a-vis Israel in order to encourage U.S. diplomatic activity.

"We shall have to brace ourselves for new demands now that we join a peace process based on territory for peace," a senior Israeli government official said here Monday, obviously without relish.

Egypt has had full diplomatic relations with Israel since their formal peace treaty in 1979. Syria, which angrily severed relations with Cairo because of it, has been Israel's bitter enemy, viewed in Jerusalem as the intransigent leader of the Arab rejectionist camp with ambitions for military parity with the Jewish state.

But at the Cairo talks, Assad seemed to project a new, peaceful intent, which has put Israel less at ease than on guard.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his policy-makers are still smarting from the public upbraiding they received from the Bush administration last month for Shamir's assertion that his government does not consider the Golan Heights to be a subject for "territorial negotiations."

Assad Not Showing True Colors

If the Israelis were dismayed, the Syrians were buoyed by Washington's recent pointed clarification of its view that the Golan Heights must be on the negotiating agenda.

Damascus therefore is seeking to project uncharacteristic moderation. The Syrians support the principle of land for peace, provided they get back all of their lost territory, as Egypt did 10 years ago when Israel returned Sinai.

Another condition is that the Palestinian problem be given top priority in the negotiations.

In exchange, there has been a significant softening of the Syrian line, Israeli academic experts say. For the first time in more than 40 years, Damascus is ready to apply the word "peace" to Israel -- not merely a cessation of the state of war but formal peace with what it has called the "Zionist entity."

But government circles here are wary, and Israeli intelligence assessments of the Cairo talks are not encouraging. The consensus is that Assad is hiding his true colors.

Syria's purported shift toward peace is entirely cosmetic, the intelligence experts say. Assad's Baath Party has not yet abandoned its basic goal of "strategic parity" with Israel.

As evidence, they cite Syria's recent pur-

chase of advanced Scud missiles from North Korea, said to be a considerable improvement over the much-less-sophisticated Scuds that Iraq hurled at Israel.

President Mubarak, trying to be solicitous of Israeli sensitivities after Assad departed, indicated that while Egypt and Syria both would like to see an international peace conference for the Middle East, it need not take place immediately or even in the near future.

Israel Feeling Pressured

Presumably, both would agree to a "regional conference" co-sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union, an idea currently being floated at various chanceries.

Presumably as well, neither Egypt nor Syria would shed tears if the Palestine Liberation Organization's discredited chief, Yasir Arafat, bowed off the diplomatic stage.

Arafat is considered to have disgraced himself and brought ridicule on the Palestinian movement by his support of Saddam Hussein.

One might think that Israel would be at least mildly encouraged by these developments.

The reality is that Israel feels it is being pushed by its American allies into responding to Arab peace feelers by offering "confidence-building measures" to the Palestinians.

Israeli-Palestinian relations are at one of their lowest ebbs since the start of the intifada because of the spate of attacks on Jews by Arabs.

Shamir therefore is insisting on far-reaching "confidence-building measures" from the other side before he sets off on his two-track journey to peace.

3 PALESTINIAN ACTIVISTS IN CAIRO, REPORTEDLY TO DISCUSS LEADERSHIP
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 3 (JTA) -- Three respected Arab professionals from the Gaza Strip who went to Cairo last week are believed to be trying to lay the groundwork for an autonomous Palestinian leadership in the territory, parallel to, if not entirely dissociated from, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Such speculation was triggered by the visit to Cairo undertaken by Fayez Abu-Rahme, a prominent lawyer; Akil Mattar, chairman of the Gaza Engineers Association; and Dr. Akram Mattar, director of the Gaza ophthalmic hospital.

They arrived in the Egyptian capital on March 28 and are expected to remain there for another week.

Abu-Rahme is politically identified with Al Fatah, the largest faction of the PLO. But he also has good relations with the Israeli authorities.

He said the purpose of his Cairo visit is to improve relations between the Egyptian government and the PLO, which has suffered because of Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Though warned by the Israeli authorities to have no contacts with the PLO, the three have already met with the PLO representative in Cairo, Sayid Mahmoud Kamel, and his deputy, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported Wednesday.

Observers believe one purpose of their journey is to seek PLO approval to introduce certain minimal measures that would give the Gaza population greater autonomy.

One idea floated in Cairo is for municipal elections in the Gaza Strip. At present, the mayors are appointed by the Israeli authorities.

**ISRAEL PLEASSED WITH LEBANESE ARMY
CRACKDOWN ON TERRORISTS IN LEBANON**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 3 (JTA) -- Israel has expressed satisfaction with the Lebanese regular army's recent crackdown on terrorists and guerrilla groups operating in southern Lebanon.

But it has not entirely prevented hostile activities against Israel and the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army, a senior officer of the Israel Defense Force northern command said Tuesday.

An SLA patrol killed three infiltrators in a brief skirmish in the southern Lebanon security zone early Wednesday morning without sustaining casualties.

The encounter occurred near Barashit village in the western sector of the zone. The intruders were said to have been headed toward the Israeli border.

The IDF officer credited the Lebanese regular army with preventing several Katyusha rocket attacks on northern Israel from Lebanese soil in recent weeks.

He said the forces sent south by the Beirut government had orders to disarm local militias. They send out patrols and have established outposts where everyone passing through the area is checked, the IDF officer told reporters.

However, the Palestine Liberation Organization said this week that it would not obey the call by Lebanese President Elias Hrawi to disband and disarm.

On Sunday, the PLO promised it would continue to fight Israel from Lebanese soil, despite a warning against this by the president.

**EX-STASI BRASS COULD BE SUED
BY VICTIMS OF ARAB ATTACKS**

By David Kantor

BONN, April 3 (JTA) -- Former officials of Stasi, the East German secret police whom the Bonn government intends to bring to trial, could also face legal action initiated by the victims of Arab terrorist attacks or by their relatives, according to legal experts at the Justice Ministry interviewed recently.

Proceedings could be initiated, for example, against former Stasi agents believed to have provided shelter and probably training for the Palestinian terrorists who massacred the Israeli Olympics team in Munich in 1972.

While the German authorities intend to prosecute ex-Stasi officials for training German terrorists, they can also be prosecuted for training Arab gunmen who may have been involved in bloody attacks in Germany or other countries, the experts said.

The victims or their families can act either as individuals or as members of groups such as Jewish communities or other organizations, the experts said.

One way is to join the proceedings against Stasi officials as accessory prosecutors.

That procedure has been used frequently at Nazi war crimes trials, where the accessory prosecutors lend legal or moral weight to the state's case.

The scope and degree of Stasi involvement in terrorist outrages has yet to be clarified. But security experts say the former East German organization played an indirect role in many of the most spectacular assaults over the years.

**AGE OF DEAD SEA SCROLLS DETERMINED
THROUGH NEW CARBON-DATING METHOD**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 3 (JTA) -- A laboratory in Zurich employing a new, improved method of carbon-14 dating has pinpointed the age of the Dead Sea Scrolls to between the second century BCE and the beginning of the first century C.E., according to Magen Broshi, curator of the Shrine of the Book at the Israel Museum, where some of the most important scrolls are kept.

The scientific finding should put an end to a 40-year challenge to the scrolls' antiquity by some wary scholars.

The determination of the amount of radioactive carbon-14 remaining in the scrolls means they were written between 2,000 and 2,200 years ago.

"This is how it should be. I have waited for this a long time," said Dr. Samuel Iwry, a scholar at Johns Hopkins University who specializes in the formative years of the group called the New Covenanters, or the Essenes, the people believed to have written the scrolls.

"We all knew all the way from internal evidence, by reading the scrolls and by reading the script," Iwry said.

Broshi said the Zurich lab is one of only three in the world using the new dating method.

Of more than 800 scrolls found, only two refer to historic events which suggest a date.

Previous estimates of their age were based mainly on paleography, the study of ancient writing. On this basis, scholars had deduced that the scrolls were written over the course of three-and-half centuries, from the mid-third century BCE to the eve of the Roman conquest, or 68 C.E.

Broshi said the Israeli government's Department of Antiquities decided last summer to submit samples of scroll material to the Swiss firm for dating.

The old method of carbon-14 dating required the destruction of parts of ancient documents to obtain the necessary carbon-14 samples. The new method requires only a pinhead-size sample, Broshi explained.

It dates the material to within 30 to 60 years, whereas the older method left a 230-year margin of error.

The Antiquities Department employed careful controls to confirm the authenticity of the test results. In addition to the 10 scroll samples, it sent Zurich samples of four other ancient parchment and papyrus scrolls clearly dated by their texts. None of the samples was identified, so their origin was unknown to the Swiss lab.

According to Antiquities Department officials, the findings submitted by the laboratory two weeks ago correlated with the known dates of the dated documents and the estimated dates of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The scrolls, probably the most momentous archaeological find of the century, were stumbled upon by a young Arab shepherd in 1947 in the caves at Kumran on the shores of the Dead Sea.

(JTA staff writer Susan Birnbaum in New York contributed to this report.)