

**TOYOTA WILL NOW SELL CARS IN ISRAEL,
ENDING COMPLIANCE WITH ARAB BOYCOTT**
By Aliza Marcus

NEW YORK, April 11 (JTA) -- Toyota Motor Corp. has announced it will soon start selling cars in Israel, making it one of the first major Japanese companies to come out publicly against the Arab-led economic boycott of Israel.

"This is the most significant company to break with the boycott," said William Rapfogel, executive director of the Institute of Public Affairs, the public policy arm of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.

"We're very hopeful that the change in Toyota is a harbinger of things to come and that other companies will see opportunity in Israel and not feel the need to restrict trade with Israel."

Over the past few years, Toyota had come under increasing pressure from Jewish organizations to begin sales in Israel.

Many Jewish groups contacted Toyota to express concern "that we were in tacit compliance" with the boycott, said Tim Andree, manager for external affairs at Toyota's North American headquarters here.

Although Toyota never admitted it adhered to the boycott of Israel, it was one of numerous Japanese companies which for years had refused to do business with the Jewish state.

"Our answer then, as it is now, is that we had to find the right partner and study the market, and that we don't jump into any market quickly," said Andree.

The economic boycott of Israel, which was organized in 1951 by the 21 nations of the Arab League, not only prohibits companies from engaging in trade with Israel, but also seeks to isolate companies that do business with the Jewish state.

Jewish Groups Pleased

In the wake of the war in the Persian Gulf, and American assistance to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, U.S. officials have become more sensitive to the economic boycott and its psychological and economic impact on Israel.

Secretary of State James Baker has suggested to Arab countries that they drop the boycott as a sign of good faith for future negotiations with Israel.

Jewish groups, meanwhile, have been focusing on Japanese compliance. Last week, the International Committee for Free Trade with Israel, an umbrella organization of six major Jewish groups, met with Japanese Embassy officials in Washington to express their concern over boycott compliance.

Toyota's decision was lauded by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which issued a statement Thursday welcoming the move and calling on other Japanese companies to follow Toyota's lead.

"Efforts by Arab states to enforce the economic boycott of Israel are destructive politically and harmful to the creation of a world market by free trade," said Abraham Foxman, ADL national director.

The American Jewish Committee called the decision "a major breakthrough in efforts to promote free and open trade between Japan and Israel."

**PEACE ACCORDS MEAN DIPLOMATIC GAIN,
POLITICAL DIVISION FOR SHAMIR REGIME**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 11 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister David Levy told a meeting of Israel's Inner Cabinet on Thursday that the agreements reached with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker here this week represent "an important political achievement for Israel."

But if the meeting was any indication, those agreements are also a source of tremendous political friction within the Cabinet between moderate forces and those opposed to any further concessions on Baker's proposal for a regional peace conference.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir abruptly adjourned the Inner Cabinet session after one of his most hard-line ministers, Ariel Sharon, questioned the wisdom of the commitments Shamir and Levy had made with respect to the type of Palestinian delegation Israel would negotiate with.

Shamir told the senior ministers that he would prefer if the Palestinian delegates to the proposed conference were part of a Jordanian delegation.

Sharon immediately demanded to know of the prime minister, "Is this a matter of preference, or do you oppose a separate Palestinian delegation?"

Before Shamir had a chance to respond, Levy reminded the prime minister that both of them had told Baker they would not oppose a separate Palestinian representation even though they preferred the Palestinians be part of the Jordanian entourage.

Then, as if still uncertain how Shamir would respond, Levy cautioned that "if anyone decides to change his mind, he had better say so immediately to avoid a crisis in our relations with the United States and damage to the State of Israel and the peace process."

No Dialogue With The PLO

The foreign minister recalled that Israel's May 1989 peace initiative included a commitment not to oppose a Palestinian delegation. He remarked that without such an agreement there would be no peace process.

The Israeli foreign minister, who seems to be carrying the ball for the Baker plan, briefed his colleagues on its nine salient points.

Negotiations will take place on "two tracks" -- one with the Arab states, the other with the Palestinians. There will be no independent Palestinian state. The Palestinian delegation will be composed exclusively of residents of the administered territories.

According to Levy, the Americans did not ask for the inclusion of Palestinians living abroad or in East Jerusalem.

A senior American official told reporters later that the composition of the Palestinian delegation was not discussed during Baker's visit to Israel.

Levy stressed there would be no dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization by either Israel or the United States.

Levy said Israel and the United States acknowledged they had different interpretations of

U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. They will be subject to negotiations at a later point in the diplomatic process, he said.

According to Levy, the Soviet Union will re-establish full diplomatic relations with Israel before it serves as co-host with the United States of the regional conference. The Soviets would accept the parameters agreed to by Israel and the United States, Levy said.

Finally, the United States agreed not to deviate from these understandings without agreement from Israel.

According to Levy, Israel has won most of the diplomatic points so far in the renewed peace process, the most important being the idea that the regional conference will serve only as a curtain raiser for direct talks between Israel and the Arab states and parallel negotiations with the Palestinians. That rules out the international conference format, which Israel has rejected.

Meeting With Jordanian

Baker got Egypt's cautious approval of the regional conference idea in Cairo on Wednesday. But his major coup was a green light from Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, whom he met while in the Egyptian capital.

He had a much tougher job in Damascus on Thursday trying to convince Hafez Assad to go along. The Syrian president insists on an international peace conference under U.N. auspices and Israel's prompt withdrawal from all Arab territory it seized in 1967.

The secretary of state was to fly to Geneva on Friday for a noon meeting with the Jordanian foreign minister, Taher al-Masri, at the U.S. Mission there.

According to reports from Geneva, Baker will meet immediately afterward with Shimon Peres, leader of Israel's opposition Labor Party, who happens to be in Geneva.

There was speculation that Peres and the Jordanian minister also might "accidentally" meet in the mission's corridors.

(JTA correspondent Tamar Levy in Geneva contributed to this report.)

FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER PLANS A MEETING WITH ARAFAT IN LIBYA

PARIS, April 11 (JTA) -- French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas plans to meet with Yasir Arafat later this month in Libya, becoming the first European foreign minister to see the Palestine Liberation Organization leader since the end of the war in the Persian Gulf.

News of such a meeting was predicted this week by diplomatic sources in Luxembourg, where leaders of the European Community held an informal summit meeting to discuss prospects for Middle East peace since the Gulf war.

On Thursday, French officials confirmed that the Foreign Ministry had sent the head of its Middle East division to Tunisia to arrange a meeting between Dumas and Arafat.

Arafat has been largely ostracized by the E.C. and members of the U.S.-led coalition that ousted Saddam Hussein's army from Kuwait since the PLO chief cast his lot with Hussein.

Dumas is the only European foreign minister to have contact with Arafat since the Gulf crisis began. It will be their second encounter since the crisis began last August.

Dumas is scheduled to leave April 21 on a visit to Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt.

JEWS PROTEST SELECTION OF MONTREAL FOR U.N. PARLEY ON THE PALESTINIANS By Bram D. Elsenthal

MONTREAL, April 11 (JTA) -- Canadian Jewish groups have reacted angrily to a plan for this city to host a United Nations conference on the Palestinians in late June.

Spokespeople for various Jewish organizations said such an event would do nothing to encourage resolution of the Middle East conflict.

"We are condemning it," said Marilyn Wainberg, national president of B'nai Brith Canada.

"We feel it should not be held and that the U.N. has clearly lost its proper focus. World attention should be focused on settling the Kurdish problem instead of another session of Israeli-bashing," she said.

The conference, organized by the U.N. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, has been held annually since 1984 at United Nations headquarters in New York.

The conferences normally attract a few hundred people, including some Israelis, representing various peace, educational, relief and other non-governmental organizations, according to U.N. publications.

A U.N. official said the purpose of the conference is to encourage discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and ways in which groups could support and aid Palestinians living in the Israeli-administered territories.

"The (U.N.) General Assembly has given a mandate for these meetings to take place, and both the General Assembly and the Security Council are involved in the search for peace in the region," said the official.

The official said conference organizers had wanted to change the meeting site so as to encourage a wider range of participants, but until now neither the United States nor Canada has been willing to agree to host the conference.

'A Very Biased Event'

Should the Canadian government approve Montreal as this year's conference site, it would have to provide security for delegates under the standard U.N.-host country agreement. But otherwise no financial outlays would be necessary, said a U.N. official.

Officials from the Canada-Israel Committee expressed dissatisfaction that they first heard of the proposed conference site through the news media, even though they hold frequent meetings with officials of Canada's External Affairs Department.

They also said they were skeptical about the potential value of such a conference, whose tentative theme this year is "Protecting Lives and Promoting Peace."

"From all explanations in the media, it seems to be a very biased event," said Robert Ritter, executive director of the CIC's national office in Ottawa.

"It is more of a polarizing and radicalizing initiative, focusing on exacerbating the conflict rather than resolving it," he said.

Thomas Hecht, chairman of the CIC's Quebec region, agreed that "a conference of this type at this time is more than ill-advised," especially because of the current peace efforts in the Middle East.

(JTA correspondent Aliza Marcus at the United Nations contributed to this report.)

**JEWISH GROUPS HAIL SENATE REBUFF
OF JUDGE FAULTED ON CIVIL RIGHTS**

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, April 11 (JTA) -- American Jewish groups hailed the Senate Judiciary Committee's decision Thursday to reject the nomination of Judge Kenneth Ryskamp for a seat on the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The committee voted 8-6, along party lines, to kill the nomination amid controversy over Ryskamp's civil rights record and recent membership in a Florida country club that allegedly discriminates against Jews, women and racial minorities.

The committee later deadlocked 7-7 on a motion to send his nomination to the full Senate without a recommendation. The tie, which occurred when Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.) joined the committee's six Republicans, means Ryskamp's nomination will not be sent to the full Senate for a confirmation vote.

Samuel Rabinove, legal director of the American Jewish Committee, said he was "pleased that the majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee did the right thing."

"The Democrats are more sensitive to civil rights concerns in general than the Republicans," Rabinove observed.

He called Ryskamp "rather oblivious to civil rights concerns" and said the federal district court judge's "lack of sensitivity" was demonstrated when he repeatedly claimed that the Riviera Country Club in Coral Gables, Fla., was not discriminatory.

Ryskamp joined the club in 1968 and quit March 13, the week before his confirmation hearings.

Arthur Teitelbaum, Southern area director of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, said the committee's action "sent the important message that membership in a discriminatory club is unacceptable."

The American Jewish Congress, which, like the other two defense agencies, testified against Ryskamp's confirmation, told the panel in March that it was struck by the number of civil rights cases in which Ryskamp's district court rulings were reversed by the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Robert Lifton, AJCongress national president, said Thursday that the vote "sends a clear signal to the Bush administration that its judicial nominees must demonstrate a commitment to equal justice under law."

**LAST 16 JEWS LEAVING ALBANIA
ARRIVE IN ISRAEL, ENDING EXODUS**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 11 (JTA) -- The last 16 Jews wanting to leave Albania arrived in Israel on Thursday afternoon, completing the exodus of the minuscule Jewish community from what was until just recently the most isolated country in Europe.

An El Al flight from Rome brought the small party, ending a semi-clandestine operation that had been under way since December.

Most, if not all, of Albania's 300 Jews are now believed to have left that Balkan country of 3.3 million, the last Stalinist enclave on the continent, which is now striving to democratize.

Most of the small community chose to immigrate to Israel. The rest have gone to the United States to reunite with family there.

Arnold Mantver, director general of the

Jewish Agency's aliyah department, who handled the operation, recalled how it started.

Several months ago, the agency received information through Jewish organizations, especially the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, that the tiny Albanian Jewish community was interested in aliyah.

Mantver said the agency was anxious to get them out before the impending elections, which took place last week. There was apprehension that an unpredictable outcome at the polls might have made their departure more difficult.

In fact, the Albanian government offered no obstacles and issued passports to the immigrants.

Its only condition was that before a family departed, one member would travel to Rome or Athens to collect Israeli visas for the family.

The immigrants flew to Israel from either Rome or Athens. The airlift was unpublicized, however, at the requests of the Italian and Greek governments.

The tiny Jewish community, concentrated mostly in the capital, Tirana, encountered no anti-Semitism, according to David Kantosi, 28, who arrived here from Albania two weeks ago.

He said the Communist regime opposed Judaism only in the context of its ideological opposition to all religions. Kantosi said older Jews would gather in private homes to secretly celebrate the Jewish holidays.

According to the Jewish Agency, the Albanian olim include a large number of professionals, such as physicians and engineers.

**WALESA PROMISES FRENCH JEWS HIS BEST
TO MOVE NUNS FROM AUSCHWITZ CONVENT**

PARIS, April 11 (JTA) -- Polish President Lech Walesa has pledged to do his best to hurry the departure of nuns from the convent at Auschwitz, the death camp in southern Poland.

Walesa made his remarks to French Jewish leaders with whom he met while on an official state visit here.

A new cloistered convent, a research facility and a meditation and conference center are under construction a short distance away from Auschwitz. They will be dedicated in May or June, when the first building is completed.

The entire facility will be finished sometime next year, according to Polish church officials.

It is not known precisely when the convent building will be completed. The nuns are expected to leave their present quarters for the new convent soon after that.

In Walesa's meeting with French Jews, Jean Kahn, president of CRIF, the umbrella body of secular Jewish organizations in France, expressed concern about cases of anti-Semitism and of historical revisionism in Poland.

Kahn asked Walesa to push for legislation to prevent further occurrences, and to ensure that the history of the Jews is taught from elementary school "in order to fight against ignorance and prejudice."

Kahn's request follows an initiative made this week by French trade unions and humanitarian organizations to teach the younger generation about the Holocaust.

On a Jewish radio program here, Walesa said he is determined to "fight always and everywhere against anti-Semitism, which is a shame for modern humanity."

"Anti-Semitism is just out of fashion," he said.

**CONGRESS HOLDS HOLOCAUST CEREMONY,
URGING NON-JEWS, ALSO, TO REMEMBER**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 11 (JTA) -- Both Jews and non-Jews have the obligation to remember the Holocaust so that they, too, will never become victims of tyranny, Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-Maine) said Thursday at a Holocaust remembrance ceremony in the Capitol.

"Today, it may be someone I don't know; tomorrow, someone I don't like; then suddenly my neighbor and then me," Mitchell warned.

He spoke at the 11th annual national Days of Remembrance ceremony in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda before an audience packed with Holocaust survivors, Jewish leaders and members of the House and Senate.

President Bush, in a letter read at the ceremony, also emphasized that individual lessons need be drawn from the Holocaust.

Benjamin Meed, chairman of the Days of Remembrance Committee and president of the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance Organization, thanked the president for organizing an international coalition to force Iraq out of Kuwait.

In his letter, Bush took note of the Persian Gulf crisis but did not draw any parallel between the Holocaust and the killing of Kurds and Shi'ite Moslems in Iraq by the forces of Saddam Hussein.

But Mitchell and Meed did.

"Today's victims are the Kurds, not Jews," the senator said.

And Meed said, "We who emerged from the pits of hell know the consequences of silence and indifference." The slogan "Never again" is "not for Jews only," he said.

Harvey Meyerhoff, chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, which organizes the annual ceremony, presented the council's Eisenhower Liberation Medal to Jan Karski, a Polish Catholic who during the war sneaked into the Warsaw ghetto and passed secret information to the Polish government in exile in London as well as the U.S. government.

Army Band Plays Yiddish Songs

A medal was also presented posthumously to Varian Fry, who as a young American working in Marseille between August 1940 and September 1941 saved the lives of more than 2,000 refugee artists and intellectuals and their families who were trapped in Vichy France after the Nazi takeover of that country.

The U.S. Army Band played "Ani Ma'amim" (I Believe), the Hebrew song of faith which Jews sang as they went to their deaths, and two Yiddish songs from the Vilna Ghetto, "Es Brent" (It's Burning) and the "Hymn of the Partisans."

Stefan Moise, a Gypsy survivor, played "Goodbye Happy Moments" on his violin, the same melody he played during his internment in 1942 in Transnistria, the Ukrainian region where Romanian Jews and Gypsies were deported.

His wife, Maria, was one of six survivors who lit memorial candles during the ceremony. Candle-lighters were accompanied by members of Congress.

The hymn for the dead, "El Molch Rachamim," was chanted by Cantor Joseph Malovany of New York's Fifth Avenue Synagogue. Abraham Foxman, vice chairman of the Days of Remembrance Committee and national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, recited the Kaddish.

**NAMES OF DEPORTED FRENCH JEWS
READ ALOUD AT PARIS CEREMONY**

PARIS, April 11 (JTA) -- The names of 76,000 Jews deported from France to perish in Nazi death camps were solemnly intoned on Yom Hashoah by teams of volunteer readers to silent crowds gathered in the Square of the Jewish Martyrs on the banks of the Seine.

The reading began Wednesday evening and ended Thursday night.

It was the first ceremony of its kind in France to commemorate the remembrance day of Holocaust victims. It was organized by Rabbi Daniel Farhi, religious leader of a Liberal (Reform) congregation in Paris.

The marathon readers included the rabbi and 95 members of his congregation and of Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld's Association of the Sons and Daughters of Jewish Deportees from France.

Six candles flickered through the night, symbolizing the 6 million Jews who died in the Holocaust.

The Martyrs Square is the site of the Vel d'Hiv roundup in 1942, when French police handed over some 8,000 Jewish prisoners to the Nazis to be loaded into boxcars for deportation.

The ceremony took place under a large blue-and-white tent. Passersby were welcomed to enter and examine documents, letters and photographs of some of the deportees.

People came, stayed for a while and left, clearly moved by the seemingly endless litany of names. It was a most effective way to counter the revisionists, the neo-Nazis and others who claim the Holocaust never occurred.

"It is essential to show the young generation what the Nazi occupation here was really like," one of the organizers of the reading explained.

"If we don't do it, we leave the stage to the revisionists. To read about the Holocaust is one thing. But to come here and hear the names of those deported makes you understand that they were real people, alive before they were killed.

"People walk away from here able to envision what happened in our community," he said.

MEMBER OF GREENS RAPPED FOR REMARK

PARIS, April 11 (JTA) -- The French minister of the environment, Brice Lalonde, said Thursday that his ministry would stop cooperating with the environmentalist Green Party as long as it refuses to expel "an anti-Semite from its ranks."

Lalonde and members of the party were outraged by the remarks of one of the Green leaders, Jean Briere, who denounced what he called the "war-mongering role of Israel and the Zionist lobby" in the Persian Gulf war.

"Zionist lobby" is recognized as a code-word for Jews.

"When free criticism of the positions of a Middle Eastern state (Israel) degenerates into appalling anti-Semitism, which could be prosecuted under (French) laws, the only possible attitude is the exclusion of Jean Briere," the minister said.

Briere's ouster was also urged by Yves Cochet, a Green Party representative to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France.

Antoine Waechter, the party's leader, called Briere's remarks "an unacceptable, blameworthy mistake."