

**JEWISH GROUPS WELCOME DECISION
BY BUSH TO WAIVE JACKSON-VANIK**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, June 3 (JTA) -- American Jewish organizations have welcomed President Bush's decision to recommend a one-year waiver of longstanding restrictions on commercial dealings with the Soviet Union, in recognition of the steady flow of emigration from the country.

Bush's action Monday in effect extends a decision he made last December to temporarily waive sanctions contained in the Jackson-Vanik Amendment to the U.S. Trade Act of 1974.

The amendment, named for the late Sen. Henry "Scoop" Jackson (D-Wash.) and former Rep. Charles Vanik (D-Ohio), links U.S. trade benefits to Soviet emigration reform.

The president made the move last December to enable the Soviet Union to obtain \$1 billion worth of U.S. credits for the purchase of wheat and other American agricultural products.

The Soviets are now seeking \$1.5 billion more of such credits. But Bush's decision Monday does not guarantee that Moscow will get them.

Nor does it guarantee that the president will extend most-favored-nation trade status to the Soviet Union, which Jackson-Vanik bars until Moscow allows free emigration.

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said no decision has yet been made on MFN, which would allow the Soviets to export products to the United States at the lowest tariff rate.

He said a decision also has not been made on when to ask Congress to ratify the trade agreement Bush signed in Washington a year ago with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Bush said at the time that he would not ask for ratification until the Soviet legislature adopted an emigration reform bill.

The Supreme Soviet passed an emigration bill last month, but many of its provisions will not be implemented until January 1993.

Emigration Concerns Remain

But one Jewish official said he expected Bush to ask for ratification and approve MFN status for the Soviets within the next two weeks.

In recommending a Jackson-Vanik waiver to Congress, Bush argued that such a move would promote the objective of the amendment: to encourage free emigration, Fitzwater said in a statement.

"The president made the decision in view of the fact that the Soviet government substantially reduced barriers to emigration for Soviet citizens," Fitzwater said.

"Numbers of Soviets emigrating rose from 2,000 in 1986 to over 370,000 in 1990. The administration believes that this positive trend will continue," he said.

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry expressed "satisfaction" with Bush's action "in light of the emigration of more than 300,000 Soviet Jews since June 1989, when the NCSJ first expressed support for such a waiver."

The group cited the increased emigration last Thursday in expressing support for a waiver.

But Mark Levin, the organization's associate executive director, said Monday that at the same

time, "we must voice our concern over inadequacies in Soviet emigration practices, including the denial of visas to long-term 'secretry' refuseniks and 'poor relatives,' as well as over new refusals imposed on individuals on grounds of 'secretry.'"

The National Conference also expressed concern over "difficulties which have arisen recently in the processing of emigration applications to the United States."

This slowdown in the processing of applicants means that the 40,000 places held for Soviet Jewish refugees coming to the United States will not all be used by the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30.

'No Triumph For Human Rights'

As it did last December, the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews said Monday that it did not oppose granting the one-year waiver on humanitarian grounds.

But the group urged Bush not to grant most-favored-nation trade benefits or submit the trade agreement to Congress, because it does not believe the new emigration law is adequate.

"The law that was passed is no triumph for human rights, and runs contrary to international standards of free movement and reunification of families," said Pamela Cohen, UCSJ president.

"It simply formalizes the arbitrary bureaucratic practices that governed the emigrata practice during the period of stagnation," she said, referring to the pre-Gorbachev era.

Cohen argued that by continuing to withhold MFN, at least until the law goes into effect, Bush can encourage Gorbachev "to take the lead in implementing democratic emigration reform."

But David Harris, executive vice president of the American Jewish Committee, welcomed the president's decision without qualification.

He argued that since the waiver is only good through June 1992, "there will be time to monitor ongoing Soviet performance and continue to seek to ensure that any remaining restrictions on free emigration by Soviet authorities have been ended."

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, said that "as long as the flow of Jews continues virtually unimpeded, we believe granting credits to the USSR is in accordance with the spirit and intent of the U.S. law."

**SOVIET ALIYAH REMAINS CONSTANT,
BUT INCREASE EXPECTED THIS MONTH**
By Charles Hoffman

JERUSALEM, June 3 (JTA) -- A total of 16,048 Soviet Jews immigrated to Israel in May, about the same as the previous month.

But immigration officials here expect the number to swell considerably this month, as Jews rush to get out of the Soviet Union before new emigration regulations that are likely to slow visa processing go into effect.

Soviet Jewish immigration to the United States also remained relatively constant, totaling 2,373 in May, compared to 2,171 in April, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society reported in New York.

The U.S. government would help pay for up

to 40,000 Soviet Jews to come to the United States as refugees this fiscal year. But in the first eight months, only 13,474 have made it.

By contrast, the May figures bring Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel for the first five months of 1991 to 66,194, according to figures compiled by the Soviet Jewry Research Bureau of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

But the immigration scene in Israel was dominated last month by the arrival of more than 14,000 Ethiopian Jews in the Operation Solomon airlift May 24 and 25.

Those arrivals brought aliyah for the month to 31,774 new immigrants, according to the Jewish Agency for Israel.

There are about 200 Ethiopian Jews in Addis Ababa who were not able to get on the airlift, and an estimated 2,000 Jews still in the north-western province of Gondar.

A public debate has started here about whether to arrange for the aliyah of Ethiopian Jews who converted to Christianity over the years and who now want to return to the fold. Their numbers may range from several thousands to several tens of thousands.

Bureaucratic Delays Expected

Unofficial estimates here say that 200,000 Soviet Jews are still expected to arrive this year, which is half of the figure projected at the beginning of the year. The drop is due to the Persian Gulf War and growing concern among prospective immigrants about the job and housing shortage in Israel.

About 80,000 Soviet Jews now hold visas for Israel but have delayed their departure because of problems anticipated in absorption.

Government officials here expect a considerable number of these people to make aliyah this month because of delays expected as a result of changes recently made in Soviet emigration regulations, some of which go into effect July 1.

As of that date, Soviet emigres will be issued passports and will not be forced to give up their citizenship when they leave. Emigrants also will be permitted to hold property in the Soviet Union.

Some people holding Israeli visas are expected to leave this month because of the delays and bureaucratic problems anticipated as the Soviet visa agency, OVIR, gears up for the change.

After July 1, officials here foresee a period of confusion and uncertainty, as Soviet Jews learn how the new regulations affect emigrants headed for Israel.

Other provisions of the new Soviet emigration law will not take effect until Jan. 1, 1993.

ETHIOPIANS TO LEAVE ABSORPTION CENTERS WITHIN A YEAR UNDER JEWISH AGENCY PLAN By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 3 (JTA) -- Israel's ministerial committee on immigrant absorption gave its approval Monday to a detailed plan aimed at settling every Ethiopian immigrant in permanent housing by this time next year.

The ministers acted little more than a week after the remarkable Operation Solomon airlift brought more than 14,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel in 30 hours.

The Jewish Agency for Israel presently operates 69 absorption centers for the 23,600 Ethiopian immigrants now in the country.

The approved plan was worked out by the

Jewish Agency to avoid repeating the situation which kept earlier Ethiopian olim stuck in absorption centers for years because the authorities could not find them permanent housing.

Under the plan, the new immigrants will be installed in permanent homes no later than May 1992, just a year after their arrival.

A key element of the plan is a financial incentive to relatives of the olim to help them achieve permanent housing.

The government plans to provide another 600 mobile homes for the new arrivals to replace hotel accommodations, which are inadequate. The immigrants living in hotels will be the first to move.

VEHICLES HIT, OCCUPANTS UNHURT IN TERROR ATTACKS NEAR JERUSALEM By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 3 (JTA) -- A private car was set on fire and an Egged passenger bus was sprayed with bullets from ambush near Jerusalem on Sunday night, but the occupants of both vehicles escaped injury.

The terrorist attacks occurred northwest of the capital, on a heavily traveled road used as an alternate to the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv main highway.

They were the latest reminder that the intifada continues, as rival Arab factions battled in Nablus in an ongoing struggle for control of the 3-year-old Palestinian uprising.

A car driven by Israeli police officer Avi Avital was returning from Jerusalem when it was hit by two gasoline bombs at about 9 p.m. local time Sunday, as it was about to enter Givon Hadasha in the West Bank.

Although the front of the car burst into flames, Avital, his wife and their two children, ages 7 and 11, escaped unscathed.

Only a few minutes later, about 20 shots were fired at the Egged bus, which was traveling on the same road from Givat Ze'ev to Jerusalem. Four bullets struck the lower part of the vehicle, but no one on board was hurt.

Meanwhile, Israeli troops were sent into the Nablus casbah Sunday to restore order, after three hours of rioting between Al Fatah activists and followers of the Moslem fundamentalist Hamas movement.

The melee was touched off by Hamas gunmen, who shot a local Fatah man, Omar Masrouji, at close range.

The seriously wounded Masrouji was rushed to the Anglican Hospital. He was undergoing emergency surgery when a Hamas gang burst into the operating room and stabbed him.

Fistfights broke out in the casbah and quickly escalated. Combatants on both sides used knives, hatchets, pistols and Uzi submachine guns until Israel Defense Force soldiers intervened.

At least three Hamas rioters were injured.

A ranking Palestine Liberation Organization official issued an emotional appeal for calm Sunday to the residents of Nablus. The message was broadcast over the Arab-owned Radio Monte Carlo.

Al Fatah, headed by Yasir Arafat, is the PLO's largest faction and represents its mainstream.

Hamas originated in the Gaza Strip shortly after the intifada began in December 1987, and spread rapidly in the West Bank. It has consistently challenged the secular PLO's claim to lead the Palestinian cause.

NEWS ANALYSIS:**HUSSEIN INTEREST IN MEETING ISRAELIS
MORE A TRIAL BALLOON THAN A BOMBHELL**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 3 (JTA) -- King Hussein's public expression of readiness to meet with Israeli leaders, voiced last Friday in an interview with the French weekly *Le Point*, appears to have been more of a trial balloon than a bombshell.

In fact, the excitement dissipated rapidly over the weekend as it became apparent that the Jordanian monarch was not following the path of the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, whose offer to go to Jerusalem in 1977 set the stage for the first peace treaty between an Arab state and Israel.

When Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy responded to Hussein's remarks by inviting him to Jerusalem, the disclaimers from Amman were quick to follow.

"I can assure you on behalf of the king that he did not intend to get up and jump immediately to Jerusalem," Taher al-Masri, Jordan's foreign minister, told reporters Sunday.

The BBC reported that the king would talk to the Israelis directly, but only in the framework of an international peace conference, based on longstanding U.N. Security Council resolutions.

That is precisely what U.S. Secretary of State James Baker tried and failed to arrange during his four trips to the Middle East since mid-March.

In Washington, the Bush administration welcomed Hussein's comments, but indicated the Jordanian monarch's proposal should be seen in the context of the regional peace conference being pressed by the United States.

"We obviously welcome the possibility of talks between Israel and Jordan," said White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater. "Getting Israel to sit down with its Arab neighbors has long been one of our goals."

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said Monday that "peace isn't possible without direct talks." She said Baker's "efforts have been designed to produce direct, face-to-face negotiations."

Fitzwater reported that "there may be progress" in Baker's efforts to bring about such talks. But he added cryptically, "I can't go into details."

Bush Sends Letters To Leaders

Fitzwater confirmed that President Bush sent letters over the weekend to Hussein, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Presidents Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and Hafez Assad of Syria, and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia.

The letters were a "follow-up on the various opportunities" that appeared during Baker's last mission to the Middle East.

He said Bush reiterated that he will continue to work for peace in the Middle East and urged the region's leaders "not to pass up the opportunity" for progress created by the end of the Persian Gulf War.

Hussein's message on direct talks with Israel therefore may have been intended mainly for Washington. The king has made clear that he has no intention of being excluded from Middle East peace negotiations and would wear the hat of a moderate.

The Jordanian monarch has survived some colossal mistakes during his long rule, Israeli

observers point out. Now, he is trying to make amends for his most serious error to date: backing Saddam Hussein of Iraq against the West and most of the Arab world.

The king has decided that his country's future lies with Syria, Egypt, the United States and, incidentally, Israel, all of which opposed Iraq.

But the Hashemite ruler faces strong Moslem fundamentalist opposition at home. The Islamic forces ascendant in Amman are not interested in dialogue with Israel.

The low-key reaction in Jordan itself to the *Le Point* interview may very well be a sign of Moslem disapproval. Syria, too, may have expressed dissatisfaction with Hussein's overture to Israel.

It got a chilly reception from some circles in Jerusalem as well.

While Foreign Minister Levy promised a "red carpet" reception for the king if he comes here, hard-line ministers Ariel Sharon and Yuval Ne'eman said if Hussein expects territorial concessions from Israel, he might as well stay home.

Similar remarks were made by Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, skeptical of the king's intentions, took a wait-and-see attitude.

In fact, Hussein has met with more Israeli officials since 1967 than any other Arab leader -- meetings held secretly and routinely denied by both sides.

They included Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, Shimon Peres, Abba Eban and Shamir, all foreign ministers at one time or another and three of them prime ministers.

Eban told the Israeli daily *Yedioth Achronot* that he had met Hussein 10 times over the years.

Despite the letdown from last Friday's news, the feeling here is that Hussein has chosen to be part of the peace process with Israel.

He seems to have no other choice. Following blindly the dictates of Syria or of the Moslem fundamentalists could spell the end of his kingdom as a political entity.

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

ISRAELI JETS LEVEL PLO BASE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 3 (JTA) -- Israeli air force jets destroyed a Palestine Liberation Organization base in southern Lebanon on Monday and returned safely to their bases, a military spokesman announced.

The target was described as a terrorist training center and staging area for attacks on Israel run by Al Fatah, the largest faction of the PLO and the one headed by Yasir Arafat. The base is located near the Ein Hilweh refugee camp, east of the port city of Sidon.

Reports from Lebanon said three people were killed in the air attack.

The Israel Defense Force said the air raid was part of its policy to keep terrorist groups in southern Lebanon off-balance by disrupting their organizational and training activities.

The IDF escorted U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney to a lookout post on the Lebanon border last Friday. Israeli officers told him that some 10,000 members of the PLO and other terrorist groups are deployed on Lebanese soil under nominal Syrian control.

**BRITISH CHIEF RABBI CHASTISED
FOR REMARKS CRITICIZING ISRAEL**

By Julian Kossoff

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, June 3 (JTA) -- British Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits has returned from Canada to a storm of controversy over his remarks critical of Israel's treatment of Palestinian refugees, contained in an interview the Evening Standard published while he was away.

Lord Jakobovits, who retires in August after 24 years as chief rabbi of Britain and the Commonwealth, said he was "angry and scandalized" by the front-page headline -- "Chief Rabbi Shames Israel" -- with which the Standard topped the piece.

The Standard defended it but deleted the word "shames" from the final edition, at the demand of the chief rabbi's office here.

Speaking from Toronto, where he received the prestigious Templeton Award for progress in religion last week, the rabbi called the headline a "complete falsification" of his words.

"When I give an interview, I rely on the integrity and honesty of the press. In this case, there was neither," he said.

Jakobovits, who has publicly criticized some policies of Israel's Likud governments in the past, drew the ire of the Anglo-Jewish leadership, whose support of the Israel government is unquestioning.

Lionel Kopelowitz, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, called the rabbi's public remarks "unhelpful" at a time when there is a need for "total solidarity" with Israel.

"On these matters, the chief rabbi speaks for himself, not as a representative of Anglo-Jewry," Kopelowitz said.

The rabbi was quoted in the Standard as saying that the plight of Palestinian refugees is "a stain on humanity," while stressing that the Jews are not to blame for creating the problem.

He also remarked, "We cannot forever dominate a million-and-a-half Arabs, lord it over them. This blinkered attitude is self-destructive."

Eric Graus, chairman of the right-wing Herut Zionist movement, chastised the chief rabbi. "It's wrong for anyone to make statements that can be misused by the media," he said.

The chief rabbi's office reported their phone lines jammed with "hostile" callers right after the interview appeared. But the mail brought more measured criticism and many letters praising the chief rabbi's stand.

**EX-COMMUNIST KNESSET MEMBER
FORMALLY JOINS LABOR PARTY**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 3 (JTA) -- Charlie Biton, who quit the Hadash Communist Party last year but kept his Knesset seat as an independent, formally joined the Labor Party this week, a move not universally popular with Laborites.

Party sources insisted the agreement he signed with Labor Secretary-General Micha Harish contains no promise of a place on the electoral list that would "guarantee" him a Knesset seat in after the next elections.

He joined like any rank-and-file supporter in the party's current membership drive, the sources said.

Biton first offered his support to Labor Party leader Shimon Peres in March 1990, when

Peres tried unsuccessfully to put together a coalition of left, center and religious parties.

But many of the party's centrist and right-wing factions recoil at his far-left views. Biton advocates negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization and has himself had contacts with PLO representatives.

His most controversial role, however, dates from the early 1970s, when Biton emerged on the public scene as founder and leader of the Black Panthers, a sometimes raucous group representing slum-dwellers and other deprived social classes.

Laborites recall that the late Golda Meir, who was prime minister at the time, referred to Biton and the Panthers as "not nice people."

**43 YEARS OF ARMY RADIO ENDING
WITH TRANSFER TO CIVILIAN OWNERS**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 3 (JTA) -- Galei Tzahal, the popular army radio station, is about to be transferred to civilian ownership, after 43 years as the voice of the Israel Defense Force.

The change is a direct result of budgetary cutbacks imposed on the IDF and the strong opinions of its new chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, who doesn't think an army has any business broadcasting news, commentary and entertainment to the general public.

The army radio was a legacy of the British Mandate, which ended in 1948. It grew out of the experiences of the 30,000 Jews who served in the Palestinian units of the British armed forces during World War II and became the nucleus of the IDF when the State of Israel was founded.

Recalling how Britain's Armed Forces Radio Services provided morale-boosting music, news and humor for homesick "Tommys" in North Africa and Europe, the IDF's fledgling general staff decided the Israeli army should have its own radio station, too.

Unlike its British and American counterparts, Galei Tzahal did not beam its programs to soldiers in far-off lands but broadcast to Israeli soldiers and civilians alike at home.

Barak, who is rapidly putting his personal stamp on the IDF, thinks that is anomalous.

He believes it improper that 19- or 20-year-old soldiers working as reporters should interview veteran politicians on controversial subjects or express opinions on the air that do not always conform with General Headquarters policy.

Barak has already shut down 30 IDF professional journals and other publications, ostensibly for budgetary reasons. Now he intends to eliminate Galei Tzahal's \$9 million annual budget.

The 235 soldiers, mainly reservists who staff the station, will be transferred to other units, although some may stay in their present jobs under contract to whomever takes over the radio.

The 64 civilian employees are concerned about their pension and seniority rights under the new management.

The inheritors of Galei Tzahal have not been announced, but three options are known to be under consideration.

The radio station could be handed over to the Educational Television Authority for operation. It could be integrated into Israel Radio, or the Israel Broadcast Authority could attach it to the commercial Second Television Channel.

Educational TV is considered the most likely parent. Galei Tzahal could become part of a proposed Public Education Communications Network.