

**SOVIET IMMIGRATION SURGED IN JUNE  
AS THOUSANDS RUSHED TO BEAT DEADLINE**  
**By Charles Hoffman**

JERUSALEM, July 1 (JTA) -- Rushing to leave the Soviet Union before new passport regulations went into effect, more than 20,000 Soviet Jews immigrated to Israel in June, the largest number so far this year.

During the last weekend of June alone, about 8,000 Soviet immigrants arrived here on dozens of flights, bringing Soviet aliyah for the month to 20,473.

That is still considerably smaller than last December's record immigration of around 35,000. But it is a big improvement over Soviet aliyah so far this year, which has been averaging about 16,000 a month.

The June total represents a 28 percent increase over the May figure and brings Soviet Jewish aliyah for the first six months of 1991 to 86,667, according to the Soviet Jewry Research Bureau of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry in New York.

By comparison, 49,575 Soviet Jews immigrated to Israel during the first half of 1990.

Nearly 400 immigrants from other countries arrived in Israel during June, bringing total aliyah to 20,853.

Unlike in prior months, no Ethiopian Jews arrived in Israel during June, following the massive Operation Solomon airlift in late May. There are several hundred Jews in Addis Ababa waiting to leave, and as many as 2,000 more in the northern part of the country.

Officials of the Jewish Agency for Israel, which coordinates aliyah, now expect Soviet immigration to drop sharply. New Soviet regulations that went into effect Monday require all Soviets leaving the country to obtain passports.

**Soviet Jews 'Weighing Their Options'**

Top officials of OVIR, the Soviet emigration authority, have promised Israeli officials and American Jewish leaders that Jews with exit permits will get priority in receiving passports.

About 130,000 Soviet Jews now hold exit permits issued by OVIR. Of this number, some 60,000 have also obtained entry visas to Israel from the consulate in Moscow.

"We trust that the Soviet authorities will fulfill their pledge to grant the required documents to Jews departing for Israel in an expeditious manner, and we look forward to hearing in the next few days that the new emigration process is proceeding smoothly," said a statement issued by Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

But Israeli officials expect that even under optimal conditions, it will take at least several months before the bureaucratic machinery of OVIR can cope with the sudden massive demand for passports.

And senior Jewish Agency officials said there are other factors that could slow Soviet aliyah this year.

Moshe Nativ, director general of the agency, told its annual assembly here last week that Soviet Jews contemplating aliyah are "rationally weighing their options." They are "carefully

planning their steps, choosing when and in what way to make aliyah.

"The feeling that they are running for their lives, which was characteristic of the early period (of the aliyah), is no longer there, at least for now," said Nativ, who recently visited the USSR.

Information from Israel about "absorption difficulties, and particularly unemployment, resound deeply among Soviet Jews," he said.

"They are also searching for alternatives, based on rumors that the U.S., Germany and other countries might soon open their doors to Soviet immigrants," he said.

New business opportunities under perestroika are also persuading some Soviet Jews to stay. Natan Sharansky, head of the Soviet Jewish Zionist Forum, said that about 80 percent of the "new class" of entrepreneurs are Jews.

Baruch Gur, head of the Jewish Agency's unit for Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, said that on the whole, there is less panic now among Soviet Jews over anti-Semitism and the continuing economic and political instability in the Soviet Union.

In New York, meanwhile, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society reported that 3,204 Soviet Jews immigrated to the United States as refugees in June, a 35 percent jump over the previous month.

The figure, while an improvement, brings refugee admissions for the first nine months of the 1991 fiscal year to only 16,674.

The U.S. government has agreed to pay for up to 40,000 Soviet Jews to come to the United States this fiscal year. But it appears unlikely that anywhere near that number will come by Sept. 30, when the fiscal year ends.

**BUSH WARNS THAT HE WILL ASSIGN BLAME  
FOR LACK OF PROGRESS ON MIDEAST PEACE**  
**By David Friedman**

WASHINGTON, July 1 (JTA) -- President Bush apparently has decided that the way to restart the stalled Middle East peace process is to threaten to blame Israel and the Arab countries publicly for the lack of progress.

"We need to have more progress, and we need to have it sooner," the president said Monday during a news conference at his vacation home in Kennebunkport, Maine.

"I think there's a lot of people wondering what in the world is going on," he said. "At some point, I think I will owe the American people my view of the details I am not willing to discuss right now."

Bush called the news conference to announce the nomination of U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Clarence Thomas to replace retiring U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. But the questions soon turned to the Middle East.

Bush said he has received a commitment to the Middle East peace process from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. "But, frankly, I would like to see us further along on some of the details," he added.

The president said he has no "time frame" for going to the public. In May, Bush said he would make a speech on the Middle East once he found the "proper venue."

While he apparently has not found it yet,

the president made clear he believes he owes it to the American people to eventually explain the U.S. proposals for talks between Israel and the Arab states.

Last month, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir sent a letter to Bush rejecting U.S. proposals to have a U.N. observer at a peace conference sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union. Shamir was responding to a letter from Bush urging Middle East leaders to be more flexible.

Shamir also rejected a proposal to reconvene the peace conference periodically if direct talks between Israel and the Arabs ran into intractable obstacles.

Israel wants the conference to be purely a ceremonial opening for direct talks and rejects any U.N. involvement in the peace negotiations.

The U.S. proposals were aimed at bringing Syria into negotiations, since Damascus has insisted that the talks be under the auspices of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.

But Syria has not yet replied to the letter from Bush outlining his proposed compromise.

If blame for the deadlock were applied to Israel and the Arab states evenhandedly, it would likely hurt Israel disproportionately.

#### No Linkage To Loan Guarantees

Bush sought to exercise such evenhandedness at his news conference Monday, when he again said Israel's settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are "counterproductive" to the peace process.

But the president also seemed to acknowledge objections from American Jewish groups to blaming Israel for the lack of progress, when the Arab states have shown no sign of willingness to enter direct talks with Israel.

"I want to be fair," Bush said. "There are other things about other countries that are counterproductive to the peace process. I'd love to see direct talks between these countries."

While presidential criticism of Jerusalem would not be expected to affect the \$3 billion in economic and military aid the United States provides Israel each year, it could hurt chances for the \$10 billion in loan guarantees Israel is expected to seek from the United States in September to help absorb Soviet and Ethiopian immigrants over the next five years.

Administration officials have been warning privately for the past few weeks that unless Israel halts building and expanding settlements, the president may not support the loan guarantees.

Bush said Monday that there is no linkage between Israel's settlements and the loan guarantees, in which the United States would act as a cosigner on the loans Israel would seek from private banks.

"But I do think, and I have said this over and over again, that it is against U.S. policy for these settlements to be built," he added.

"We have not changed our position on settlements, and we are not going to change our position on settlements," he stressed.

Despite his gloomy assessment, Bush said he still has hope that progress can be made in the Middle East in the wake of the Persian Gulf War.

"I am told the credibility of the United States of being a catalyst for peace is still very strong and very good" in both Israel and the Arab countries, he said.

#### **U.N. SYMPOSIUM ON PALESTINE BECOMES ISRAEL-BASHING ROUND**

By Bram D. Eisenthal

MONTREAL, July 1 (JTA) -- An opposition leader in the Canadian Parliament has urged the suspension of U.S. financial support for Israel until Israel shows "respect for international law."

Svend Robinson, shadow external affairs minister of the New Democratic Party, told a symposium of non-governmental organizations held here this past weekend that Israel's "illegal settlements" in the administered territories are a major impediment to peace and insisted that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

His view is not shared by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney or External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall, who say the PLO delegitimized itself by supporting Iraq in the Persian Gulf War.

Robinson drew standing ovations from some 250 people attending the eighth United Nations North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, held here June 28 to 30.

The gathering was organized by the North American Regional Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, which has held seven past symposia on the Palestinian situation since 1980, all in the United States.

Mainstream Jewish organizations, not invited unless they subscribed to anti-Israel U.N. resolutions, dismissed the weekend conference as a forum for "Israel-bashing."

Robinson told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the 1975 U.N. General Assembly resolution denigrating Zionism as a form of racism was "obviously one of the barriers to a comprehensive settlement in the region."

He said he would back a review of the resolution but only "in an overall context. We cannot have selective respect for U.N. resolutions."

#### Call For Boycott Of Israel

A speech written by PLO chief Yasir Arafat in Tunis on June 24 was read to the audience by Nasser al-Kidwa, permanent observer of the PLO to the United Nations.

Arafat complained that the current U.S. peace initiative "helps the Israeli government to maintain a more obdurate position" and paves "the way for the implementation of the transfer scheme," meaning the expulsion of Palestinians from the administered territories.

Speakers at the symposium were mainly officers of various pro-Palestinian committees who charged Israel was engaging in "brutal oppression" and "human rights violations."

Several Jewish NGOs participated, such as the New York-based International Jewish Peace Union; Jews for a Just Peace, which is headquartered in Vancouver; and Le Regroupement Pour un Dialogue Israel-Palestine of Montreal.

Canadian Friends of Peace Now, which is represented on the national executive of the Canadian Jewish Congress, did not attend.

Thomas Hecht, chairman of the Canada-Israel Committee's Quebec Region, said the conference was imbalanced because it focused on human rights abuses in Israel while ignoring them in neighboring Arab states. "This is a kangaroo court where the enemies of Israel decide that Israel must be condemned," he said.

The symposium closed with a secret ballot on a resolution to boycott Israeli goods and services. It passed overwhelmingly.

## LEBANESE ARMY UPROOTS PLO FROM SIDON; FLEEING LEBANESE ENTER SECURITY ZONE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 1 (JTA) -- The Lebanese regular army took over the southern Lebanon port city of Sidon on Monday, displacing large elements of the Palestine Liberation Organization, who relinquished their positions in town but not their weapons.

The Beirut government, which enjoys Syrian protection, was able to extend its jurisdiction as far south as Sidon, as part of a plan to eject all factional militias from the once war-torn country.

The plan, which was launched in November in and around Beirut, calls for the PLO to also put down its arms. But the PLO has resisted.

Over 1,000 Lebanese soldiers supported by 130 tanks and armored vehicles entered Sidon. They were unopposed by some 10,000 armed PLO men, about 6,000 of them loyal to Yasir Arafat's mainstream Fatah wing.

But when the Lebanese regulars tried to move east of the city, they were blocked by heavily armed PLO units guarding the Ein Hilweh and Mich Mich refugee camps, which are Palestinian strongholds.

The PLO insisted it had to protect the camps "against Israeli aggression."

The showdown between the Lebanese army and PLO was precluded last week by the flight of thousands of civilians, who feared getting caught in the cross fire between the Lebanese army and the Palestinians. Many who fled took refuge overnight in the Israeli-controlled southern Lebanese security zone.

Uri Lubrani, coordinator of Israeli affairs in southern Lebanon, said Monday that "any unarmed person wishing to take refuge in the Israeli-controlled region will be welcome."

The Israel Defense Force and its allied South Lebanon Army were on alert Monday as they observed, from their vantage points in the southern Lebanon zone, the arrival of the Lebanese troops and the pullback of the PLO.

The SLA commander, Gen. Antoine Lahad, said he would not allow the PLO to attack his men behind a screen provided by the official Lebanese army. But he predicted a showdown between the Lebanese regulars and the PLO in a few days.

It is not known whether Beirut intends to move its Syrian-protected forces further south toward the Israeli border. If it does, a confrontation could occur with the IDF and SLA.

## FATE OF ISRAELI IN KASHMIR UNCLEAR, MIGHT BE PAWN IN SEPARATISTS' QUEST

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 1 (JTA) -- The fate of an Israeli tourist held prisoner by Kashmiri rebels in northern India remained uncertain Monday as the body of one of his companions killed last week was flown home.

While Erez Cohen of Ramat Efal near Tel Aviv was buried Monday, Yair Yitzhaki, a 22-year-old resident of the Old City in Jerusalem, appeared to be a bargaining chip of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, Moslem extremists who want Kashmir province separated from India.

He and Cohen were among seven Israelis and a Dutch woman kidnapped June 26 while vacationing on a houseboat on Lake Dal, near Srinagar, the Kashmiri capital.

Cohen was killed in a gun battle in which three other Israelis were wounded but escaped.

Yitzhaki, held separately, was allowed to speak to the media over the weekend and to inform his family that his release was imminent. But that no longer seemed to be the case Monday.

His captors said they were prepared to hand him over, but only to a U.N. representative, "if the Indian government wishes to request it."

The Kashmiris said they want U.N. intervention because they do not trust the Indians. The Indians accused the separatists of a propaganda ploy.

Outside observers believe the Liberation Front is using its Israeli prisoner to force the New Delhi government to invite the United Nations into the scenically beautiful but deadly province, where police say more than 3,200 people have died since the anti-India uprising began in January 1990.

Moshe Yegar, the Israeli Foreign Ministry's deputy director general for Asian and African affairs, flew to New Delhi on Sunday to try to arrange Yitzhaki's release and see the wounded.

Yegar said he was assured that the three wounded men are in good condition at a military hospital in Srinagar and should be able to fly home in about a week.

Cohen's body, flown from Bombay, was accompanied by the three uninjured members of the vacation party -- Ayala Berman, a Dutch woman not immediately identified and Haggai Caspi of Ramat Efal.

The Kashmiri separatists are considered dangerous. On Monday they extended for 24 hours the deadline for killing a captured Indian oil executive and a badly wounded Swedish hostage.

## PIG'S HEAD PUT AT BNEI BRAK SHUL REVEILED BY RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 1 (JTA) -- Israelis of nearly every persuasion have expressed revulsion at the placement Sunday of a severed pig's head at the entrance of the Great Synagogue in Bnei Brak, the religious township northeast of Tel Aviv.

President Chaim Herzog called the vandalism an "unprecedented, disgusting act" and said he hoped the perpetrators would be caught and punished.

Spokespersons for the various kibbutz movements, traditionally bastions of secularism, also expressed their abhorrence of the act, saying it was a sacrilege unworthy of anyone calling himself a Jew.

The kibbutzim have come under attack from some Orthodox rabbis lately for allegedly trying to lead Sephardic immigrants away from their Orthodox practices.

But secular groups stressed that the struggle against religious coercion, a battle waged since the founding of the state, must not degenerate into a campaign against religious people.

The desecration of the Bnei Brak synagogue was noticed by passersby, who called the police.

A note pinned to the pig's head said, "I am also a haredi Jew."

"Haredi" is the term applied to the most strictly Orthodox groups. The word also means "fearful."

Secular Israelis have used the double meaning when they protest attempts by the Orthodox to enforce their religious practices on non-observant Jews.

**CEREMONY IN BUCHAREST PAYS TRIBUTE TO ROMANIAN JEWS KILLED 50 YEARS AGO**  
By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, July 1 (JTA) -- An international array of government officials, diplomats, Jewish leaders and religious figures gathered Monday in the Romanian capital of Bucharest to pay tribute on a grand scale to the thousands of Jews who were tortured, deported or executed there beginning on this day 50 years ago.

Representatives of the governments of Romania, the United States, Germany and Israel took part in the ceremonies at the Choral Synagogue, the center of Romanian Jewish life.

The impressive turnout was an apparent show of unity against anti-Semites in Romania, who have come out in force in the past few months, producing anti-Semitic articles in the mainstream media and threatening the country's chief rabbi, Moses Rosen.

It was a way of telling the Romanian government, which recently restored the name of wartime despot Ion Antonescu, that Jews will not allow the resurgence of anti-Semitism and will bring the attention of the entire world to bear if troubles should arise for the Jews there.

Among the hundreds in attendance were Richard Schifter, assistant U.S. secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs; Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; Zvi Mazel, Israeli ambassador to Romania; Zevulun Hammer, Israeli minister of education; and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel, a native of Sighet, a legendary Jewish city in northern Romania.

Also present was Patriarch Pectist, head of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Rabbi Rosen made perhaps his most strident speech, unabashedly reminding the Romanians of their anti-Semitic past.

**'You Killed Us And You Murdered Us'**

Reviewing the history of Romania's Jews and their relationship to the country's non-Jews, he called out emotionally, "You killed us and you murdered us, and then you silenced us. Why not say it clearly and openly now?"

In front of the synagogue, a 10-foot bronze menorah on a stone pedestal was unveiled. Its inscription boldly states that Romanians bear equal responsibility with the Nazis for killing Jews during the Holocaust.

The inscription says that "the 400,000 Jews of Romania were killed during the Holocaust by the fascists, the Germans, the Romanians and the Hungarians," Amir Shaviv, spokesman for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, reported in a telephone call from Bucharest.

A military ceremony accompanied the unveiling, with a Romanian military band playing.

Romanian President Ion Iliescu was not present, called to Prague to take part in the official dismantling of the Warsaw Pact. But he issued a powerful statement on the occasion, which was read by the president of the Romanian Senate, Alexandru Birladeanu.

Iliescu recognized the responsibility of the Romanian people to some of the murderous events of the Holocaust. He expressed "our homage to the Jewish martyrs, victims of fascism."

"The attempt to physically exterminate a whole people, the Jewish people, can be reckoned among the greatest crimes of history," he said.

The ceremony marked the 50th anniversary

of anti-Semitic measures enacted by the Nazis and their collaborators on July 1, 1941.

The pro-Nazi Bucharest government, which had been seeking to make Jews the scapegoats for the failure of the Romanian-German forces to make progress in their invasion of adjacent Soviet Bessarabia, executed 500 Jews in the city of Iasi. Some 12,000 Jews are believed to have been killed in the pogroms that followed.

A ceremony was scheduled for Tuesday in Iasi, a Moldavian city previously renowned as the birthplace of Yiddish theater.

**U.S. Monitoring Rights Situation**

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker sent a strong message of support for Romanian Jewry, which was read at Monday's ceremony in Bucharest by U.S. Ambassador Allan Green Jr.

In the statement, Baker said the United States is following events in Romania closely, including the treatment of religious minorities.

"Respect for human rights and democracy are some of the criteria on which the United States will judge the developments in Romania," he said in the statement.

Assistant Secretary Schifter spoke of anti-Semitism as a "mental illness." But he said that when it becomes widespread, "there is reason for concern, reason to fear the damage it could do to the entire body politic of a country."

Cardin of the Conference of Presidents said it is "the sacred duty of the Jewish people to remember" and to "warn against the repetition of atrocities against the Jews."

Rabbi Arthur Schneier of New York's Park East Synagogue and founder of the ecumenical Appeal of Conscience Foundation, said, "Scapegoating and Jew-baiting will not help resolve the serious issues facing the Romanian people."

Raymond Epstein, vice president of the Joint Distribution Committee, brought greetings on behalf of the humanitarian agency, which has virtually sustained the Romanian Jewish community for the past 40 years.

And Nobel Peace laureate Wiesel said, "The Jewish people lost about 1.5 million children. How many Nobel prize winners were among those children?"

"Some of them might have discovered the cure for cancer. Others might have enriched us with inventions," he said. "And all that is lost in the Holocaust."

**ISRAEL GETS OBSERVER STATUS AT CERN**  
By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, July 1 (JTA) -- Israel has been granted observer status by the European Organization for Nuclear Research, with which its scientists have collaborated since the late 1970s.

Israel and the center, known internationally as CERN, will sign an agreement on July 25 that will make Israeli companies eligible to participate in CERN projects.

Israel will be required to contribute the equivalent of \$640,000 annually, 75 percent of which will be used for the purchase of Israeli products by CERN and 15 percent to provide young Israeli scientists with short periods of training at the CERN facilities.

The giant research project, which straddles the Franco-Swiss border, was established in 1954 for nuclear collaboration among European states for peaceful purposes only. Only European countries are eligible for full membership.