

ISRAELIS CONCERNED OVER SOVIET COUP, LOOKING AT EMIGRATION, PEACE PROCESS By Gil Sedan and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- Israeli leaders reacted cautiously to Monday's coup in the Soviet Union, which appears to have ousted President Mikhail Gorbachev.

The coup, which swiftly toppled a vacationing Gorbachev from power and established in his place a group of hard-line Communists called an "emergency committee," left in its wake questions about the state of a Middle East peace conference and Soviet Jewish emigration.

Israeli officials expressed hope in public statements, but their private remarks were weighted by uncertainty and foreboding.

More upset than government figures were the thousands of recently arrived Soviet immigrants, who expressed deep fears for the safety and future of family and friends they left behind.

The glum mood among the Israelis contrasted with a sense of glee among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who seemed glad Gorbachev had been overthrown.

They expressed hope that the hard-liners who had ousted him would halt Jewish emigration, support Arab demands to stop Jewish settlement in the administered territories and eventually force the Israelis to withdraw entirely from them.

Varying degrees of support for the rapid Kremlin makeover were also heard from spokesmen in Iraq and Syria and from the Palestine Liberation Organization in Tunis.

Israel's Foreign Minister David Levy said he prayed the Cold War would not be resumed, that Soviet Jews would continue to emigrate and that the peace process would advance no matter who rules in Moscow.

"We are following events in the Soviet Union suspensefully and with concern," Levy said. "We pray the rapprochement between the Eastern and Western blocs will continue."

Flights Expected To Continue

He hoped that whoever emerged on top at the Kremlin would understand "the significance of keeping the gates open to Jewish emigration."

The big, unanswered question now is whether the Soviet commitment to a peace conference will continue in the absence of Gorbachev, who agreed with President Bush to host an international peace conference in October.

"Having invested so much effort, the Arabs and Israel must show responsibility at this time of trial," Levy counseled.

But it was the fate of Soviet aliyah that was uppermost in the mind of Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization Executives.

He had just returned from the Soviet Union, bringing back news of just opened Jewish Agency bureaus in Moscow and Leningrad and word that direct flights had been approved by both Soviet and Russian officials.

Dinitz and senior officials held an emergency meeting Monday to evaluate the new situation and formulate policy. He was visibly relieved when telephone contact was finally established with 60 of the Jewish Agency's 80 emissaries, scattered in

30 cities in the Soviet Union. Earlier in the day, it had been impossible to reach them.

Arye Levin, Israel's senior representative in Moscow, told Israel Radio that all Israelis in the Soviet capital were well and that despite a curfew called Monday night, the atmosphere was calm. He said immigrant flights would leave as planned.

But there were ominous signs at the Soviet consular establishment in Tel Aviv, which issues visas three days a week to Israeli tourists and former Soviet citizens.

The office closed after one hour Monday morning, with only seven visas issued. An official, turning away a long line of applicants, said he was following orders from a "higher authority."

Dinitz said that of the 1 million Soviet Jews who have applied for Israeli invitations to immigrate, about 100,000 had obtained Soviet exit permits and 60,000 of them had entry visas for Israel but have not used them.

He predicted a rush to leave, "because it is an ironclad rule that whenever there is discomfort or disintegration of authority, or a change in the political structure, minorities are usually apprehensive, and Jews among them are the first."

JEWISH LEADERS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT NEW LEADERSHIP IN MOSCOW By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- American Jewish communal leaders have expressed deep concern that the ouster Monday of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will not bode well for the Soviet Union's large Jewish minority.

They are particularly concerned that the change of leadership in Moscow may have an adverse impact on the mass emigration of Soviet Jews, who have been pouring out of the country by the thousands each week.

Gorbachev was removed from power early Monday in a bloodless coup by Soviet hard-liners, reinforced by military tanks and soldiers. Vice President Gennady Yanayev was named acting president and chairman of an eight-member ruling committee, which immediately declared a six-month state of emergency.

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry issued a statement Monday saying it was "deeply troubled" by the developments and their potential impact on the Soviet Jewish community.

The group called on the new leadership in Moscow to "adhere scrupulously to all of the Soviet Union's international and constitutional obligations, particularly in the area of human rights, and to continue to allow Soviet Jews to emigrate freely."

Shoshana Cardin, the group's chairman, spoke Monday to two high-ranking State Department officials and was assured that the Bush administration is closely monitoring the impact of the Moscow developments on the Jewish community and on emigration.

She and Martin Wenick, the National Conference's executive director, later conducted a telephone briefing for officials of 110 national Jewish agencies, federations and community relations councils.

Jewish organizational leaders and Soviet Jewry activists expressed concern over the con-

servative politics of Acting President Yanayev, and the other members of his ruling committee, who include Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov, KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov and Internal Affairs Minister Boris Pugo.

'Purveyors Of Anti-Semitism'

"The leaders of today's extraconstitutional act have been in the forefront of the opposition to the policies of glasnost and perestroika," observed Cardin.

"The takeover by the military and the KGB means that the most virulent purveyors of anti-Semitism are now in control," said Pamela Cohen, national president of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews. An anti-Semitic backlash, she said, is a "distinct possibility."

David Waksberg, a vice president of the group, cited speeches given by Kryuchkov last December and by Pugo this spring in which they talked of "foreign subversives" threatening the country. In the language of Soviet conservatives, "Jew equals Zionist, equals cosmopolitan, equals foreign subversive," he said.

David Harris, executive vice president of the American Jewish Committee, said Yanayev's committee includes "sectors of Soviet society that have traditionally opposed emigration" as a fundamental right, including the KGB.

But New York Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the ecumenical Appeal of Conscience Foundation, said Yanayev told him in Moscow last March that he supported free emigration. Schneier said he did not believe the new government would "abandon any policies in place, such as the granting of permission for Jews to emigrate."

While numerous American Jewish groups issued statements Monday expressing concern that emigration could be interrupted, some analysts doubted the Soviet leadership would risk jeopardizing promised economic assistance from the West, including \$1.5 billion in U.S. credits due to be released soon for the purchase of food.

Mark Talisman, Washington representative of the Council of Jewish Federations, predicted that the new Soviet government would not restrict emigration because "they cannot do anything in regard to their economy without additional assistance from the outside."

Moscow Airport Was Functioning

President Bush announced Monday that U.S. and other Western aid to the Soviets was being "put on hold." It was not immediately clear whether he would still ask Congress to ratify the U.S.-Soviet trade agreement he signed with Gorbachev in June 1990.

On Monday, the Union of Councils called on Bush to withhold the trade agreement. It also urged him to cancel U.S. participation in an international human rights conference scheduled to take place in Moscow next month.

There were conflicting reports Monday about whether freedom of movement in and out of the Soviet Union had been interrupted.

There were some reports that borders had been closed. But both the State Department and the Union of Councils reported that Moscow's international airport was operating Monday.

There were unconfirmed reports that some offices of OVIR, the Soviet emigration bureau, had closed Monday. But both the National Conference and the Union of Councils said they were unprepared at this point to draw any conclusions about a change in emigration policy.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES:

IN A CRAMPED BERLIN APARTMENT, CONCERN ABOUT THOSE LEFT BEHIND
By Aliza Marcus

BERLIN, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- In a cramped apartment, in a faceless East Berlin housing block, a Soviet Jewish family sat in stunned silence Monday. The only noise came from the crackle of a shortwave radio and the low drone of the television set, bringing news from Moscow.

"We had so many hopes for the future," said the 30-year-old son. "Now, it is all finished."

For the estimated 5,000 Soviet Jews in Germany, news of the military coup against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev brought new fears for friends, relatives and even themselves.

The Soviet Jews living here, on the outskirts of Berlin, were not willing to give their names, worried that even now, in their new land, the KGB was lying in wait. While children played in hallways and on sidewalks, parents waited vainly in front of radios and television sets.

"We have too many relatives still in the Soviet Union," said a 62-year-old woman. "You can't understand our fear. We are here, free, but also the Soviet army is here."

Her son, whose 12-year-old daughter returned to the Soviet Union last week after a brief visit, stared blankly at the radio. When asked if he was worried for her safety, he shrugged his shoulders and said, "What do you think?"

He recalled that the last thing his daughter told him was that she wanted to come again soon.

"What can I say? I can only sit here and wait," the worried father said. "It is impossible to phone, impossible to find out what is really happening."

Phone Contact Nearly Impossible

The family exchanged the latest rumors: that Gorbachev was dead, that the president of the Russian republic, Boris Yeltsin, was under house arrest, that tanks were opening fire on the streets of Moscow.

The only phones in the area were broken, but even if they were working, it would be almost impossible to get a phone call through to Riga, Vilnius, Kiev or one of the hundreds of other Soviet cities where relatives and friends are located.

In this housing block, where about 200 Soviet Jews live, everyone had somebody they wanted to reach across the now-closed border.

For this particular Soviet family, Monday's news came as a double shock: They had been expecting the arrival of a friend from Riga. Now, they were sure, he was stuck at the border, and nobody knew when it would be open again.

A year ago, the family came to what was then East Germany, hopeful they would be allowed to stay. After unification, the German government granted them and thousands of other newly arrived Soviet Jews residency, but has since required that hopeful immigrants first apply for the proper visas in the Soviet Union.

While their legal status is relatively secure, compared to that of Soviet Jews who arrived here from Israel, the conversation Monday focused largely on passports, visas and other documents.

"We were lucky we left the Soviet Union a year ago," said the 62-year-old grandmother. "But what has happened to our homeland?"

**ISRAEL AND ALBANIA SIGN PROTOCOL
TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- Israel and Albania agreed Monday to establish diplomatic relations for the first time.

A hard-line Marxist state when Israel was founded in 1948, Albania did not follow the Soviet Union and other Communist bloc countries in recognizing Israel.

A protocol to establish ties was signed here by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy and his visiting Albanian counterpart, Muhamet Kapllani.

It was signed as a military coup in the Soviet Union swept President Mikhail Gorbachev from power, bringing a sense of uncertainty and fear to that country as well as Eastern Europe, so recently freed from Communist hegemony.

But Kapllani said, "I believe that the democratic process is something that cannot be stopped in the Soviet Union."

The two countries plan to exchange ambassadors, although it is unlikely that Israel will open an embassy in Tirana, the Albanian capital. Instead, Israel's ambassador to neighboring Italy will probably serve as ambassador to Albania.

Albania, Europe's poorest country, is reeling from years of isolation and tight government control. Thousands of Albanians who tried to flee to Italy were returned there forcibly last week.

Kapllani said the protocol signed with Israel is more than symbolic. It is a step of historic significance, marking "economic, cultural, technical and scientific cooperation," he said.

Neighboring Yugoslavia is now the only Eastern European country apart from the Soviet Union that has no diplomatic relations with Israel.

**SHAMIR GETS INDIRECT INVITATION
TO VISIT CAIRO 'ANY TIME HE LIKES'**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir finally got his long-awaited invitation from President Hosni Mubarak, though it was less than formal and not extended directly by the Egyptian leader.

It was offered instead by Egypt's deputy prime minister, Yussuf Wali, while entertaining a delegation of nine Likud "young guard" members for dinner Sunday night at his home in Cairo.

The younger-generation Likud politicians are on a five-day visit to Egypt as guests of that country's ruling party.

Gil Samsonov, who heads the group, was told by Wali that Shamir would be welcome to visit Cairo "any time he likes." The Egyptian official also told the Israelis there has been a "dramatic change" in Mubarak's attitude toward Shamir in the past 10 days.

The Egyptian leader has been cold to Shamir since the Likud leader took office and has blamed him for the impasse in the peace process.

Shamir is the only Israeli prime minister not invited to Cairo since Israel and Egypt signed their peace treaty in 1979. The omission has chilled relations between the two countries, although Foreign Minister David Levy, a Likud moderate, was warmly received in Cairo last month and had a lengthy talk with Mubarak.

The Likud delegation met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa, who said Egypt would accept an Israeli withdrawal to its pre-1967 borders with slight changes. It need not be a

total evacuation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, he said.

But Moussa irritated his guests by describing East Jerusalem as occupied Arab territory and insisting its future status must be negotiated.

He did not endear himself to the young Likudniks by likening Israel's presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait a year ago.

But the Israeli visitors were equally outspoken. Samsonov accused the Egyptians of "waiting for another party to take over (in Israel), a party that will compromise much more."

He stressed that "the party that can make peace, that can convince the Israeli people to make peace with other Arab countries, is Likud."

**SYRIA WILL NOT ATTEND CONFERENCE
ON WATER RESOURCES IF ISRAEL DOES**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- Syria has served notice it will not attend a conference on Middle East water resources if Israel is invited.

Political sources in Jerusalem said Damascus' announcement cast serious doubt on Syria's intentions to participate in the peace process.

President Hafez Assad reportedly told U.S. Secretary of State James Baker at their Damascus meeting last month that he was prepared to enter direct talks with Israel.

But his attempt now to block an invitation to Israel to discuss a regional issue is viewed with the utmost gravity in Jerusalem, Ma'ariv reported Monday.

The conference, due to convene in Turkey in November, was organized at the initiative of Joyce Starr, an internationally famous American hydrologist. She has been working for years to find solutions to the limited water resources in the Middle East, a problem affecting every country in the region.

The United States made its backing of the conference conditional on an invitation to Israel. The Syrian ultimatum may lead to its cancellation.

SETTLER WHO SHOT ARAB WON'T SERVE TIME
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- A West Bank Jewish settlement leader who killed a Palestinian youth in the early days of the intifada will serve no time in jail.

Pinchas Wallerstein, chairman of the Match Binyamin regional council in the Ramallah region, was fined \$3,400 and sentenced to four months' public service Monday for "causing death through negligence."

But Jerusalem District Court Judge Ezra Hadaya added a 12-month suspended sentence, which could be invoked over a two-year period.

The incident occurred early in 1988 when Wallerstein, driving to his home settlement of Ofra in the West Bank, encountered stone-throwing youths near the Arab village of Beitin.

By his account, he left his car and fired his Uzi submachine gun into the air. When the attack continued, he fired into the ground. Ricocheting bullets killed one youth and wounded another.

Wallerstein insisted at his trial that he acted in self-defense. But in a plea bargain last week, he admitted firing his weapon "irresponsibly."

The prosecution reduced the charge from killing to negligence and agreed to ask for no more than six months in jail.

**JEWISH CENTER AND CEMETERY BOMBED
IN STRIFE-TORN CAPITAL OF CROATIA**

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- Yugoslavia's small Jewish community was in a state of high tension and under tight security after bombs exploded early Monday morning at the entrance to the Jewish community center and at the Jewish cemetery in Zagreb, capital of the Croatian republic, where strife has been rampant in recent weeks.

There were no casualties but considerable damage, according to Jewish community sources.

Shortly after the bombings, the tiny Jewish community in the Adriatic coast city of Dubrovnik received an anonymous telephone warning that "you will be next."

The Jewish community leadership in Zagreb met in emergency session immediately, as did Yugoslavia's Federation of Jewish Communities, based in Belgrade, which is in neighboring Serbia.

The Jewish Historical Museum in Belgrade, the national capital, was closed to the public Monday, and precautions were taken at Jewish institutions elsewhere as word of the incident spread.

The Federation of Jewish Communities in Yugoslavia sent a message from Belgrade to the World Jewish Congress in New York and to Jewish organizations in London and Paris.

It reported that "an explosive device placed behind the locked door of the Jewish community building in Zagreb, Croatia, went off shortly after 4 a.m." local time.

The message, signed by Aleksandar Masic, deputy president, and Luci Petrovic, secretary, said, "There are no casualties but heavy material damage."

According to reports reaching here, the blast at the Zagreb community center, an imposing building in the heart of the city, smashed windows and damaged cars parked nearby. But the priceless library housed inside was unscathed.

'Knew Something Like This Would Happen'

Damage at the Jewish cemetery, which occupies a section of the city's sprawling municipal cemetery, was not immediately specified.

The attack sent shudders through Yugoslavia's small Jewish community and put Jewish institutions in a state of alert. "So it begins," Jewish scholar Eugen Werber said in a telephone call from Belgrade.

"I am not a prophet, but I knew something like this would happen," Werber said, referring apparently to the troubled times in Yugoslavia, marked by bloody fighting between Croats and Serbs.

The bombing brought strong reactions from Jewish leaders abroad.

In New York, Israel Singer, secretary-general of the WJC, sent a message to Zagreb, expressing shock and horror. "We are with you in your time of trial and are at your disposal if there is anything you feel we can do," he told the community leadership.

Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation in New York, called on Croatia's political and religious leaders to condemn the outrage and "act to prevent such tragedies in the future."

The Croatian government implied at a Zagreb news conference after the bombings that Serbs were responsible.

"That is ridiculous," said a Serbian Jew.

**EXECUTIVE ADMITS HE KNEW IN 1986
FIRM HELPED LIBYA WITH POISON GAS**

By David Kantor

BONN, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- A chemical company executive has admitted in court that he knew as early as 1986 that his firm was illegally sending Libya the material and technology to build a poison gas factory at Rabta.

Eugen Lang, who worked for Imhausen-Chemie A.G., produced a check for 225,000 marks (about \$130,000) last Friday in a Mannheim court, saying, "This was my bonus from the unlawful Rabta project. I am hereby giving it away."

He said he sent a check for a similar amount to the income tax authorities.

Lang is one of three Imhausen executives on trial for violating German export laws by the clandestine shipment of restricted materials to Libya.

Jurgen Hippenstiel-Imhausen, founder and former manager of the chemical plant, is serving a five-year prison term in Mannheim for his role in the Rabta project. He is reported to be conducting "business as usual" from his prison cell.

When arrested in May 1989, Hippenstiel-Imhausen he had denied involvement in the Rabta plant.

He pleaded guilty in June 1990 to violating West Germany's export law and evading back taxes, but not to supplying substances for producing poison gas. He maintained the plant was established to make pharmaceuticals.

Lang initially stonewalled, saying he had known nothing about poison gas production in Libya until the U.S. news media broke the scandal in 1989 on the basis of CIA reports.

But he confessed last Friday that he knew the real purpose of the Rabta plant in 1986.

His co-defendant, Rudiger Berndt, continued to deny early knowledge. He said he believed the project he was working on was for the production of pharmaceuticals in Hong Kong.

**REVISIONIST MUST BE RETRIED,
CANADIAN SUPREME COURT RULES**

By Ben Kayfetz

TORONTO, Aug. 19 (JTA) -- James Keegstra, a former high school teacher in rural Alberta, must stand trial again for inciting hatred of Jews, the Canadian Supreme Court decided last Friday.

It dismissed without comment his appeal against the Alberta Appellate Court's decision to retry him.

Keegstra, who taught in Eckville, a village of 900, and was its mayor, preached to his 12th grade social studies classes that the Holocaust was a hoax and Jews are behind all evil.

Brought to trial at the complaints of parents, none of them Jewish, he was convicted in 1985 of wilfully promoting hatred of an identifiable group, in violation of Canada's anti-hate statute, and was fined \$5,000.

The conviction was overturned on a technicality by the Alberta Appeals Court in June 1988. But the same court refused to dismiss the charges.

In March, it ordered a new trial for the 56-year-old Keegstra.

While the decision was generally welcomed by Canadian Jews, there is strong concern in Jewish and other circles that the new trial will serve no purpose but to provide Keegstra with a platform and an aura of martyrdom.