

**U.S. ALLOWING 50,000 SOVIET JEWS
TO IMMIGRATE IN NEW FISCAL YEAR****By Howard Rosenberg**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- The U.S. government will allow nearly twice as many Soviet Jews to immigrate here in the next year as arrived here during the past 12 months.

The reason is that far fewer Soviet Jews than expected came to the United States during the 1991 fiscal year, which ended Sept. 30.

At the Bush administration's request, Congress had provided funding for 40,000 Soviet Jews to come, but largely because of processing problems in the Soviet Union, only 26,680 actually arrived, according to the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

For the 1992 fiscal year, which began Oct. 1, the United States will allow 61,000 refugees to immigrate here from the Soviet Union, including about 50,000 Jews.

The quota, which President Bush officially set Oct. 10, also applies to those who lived in the Baltic republics prior to U.S. recognition of their independence on Sept. 2.

The figure was agreed to late last month in negotiations with the House and Senate Judiciary Committees. It includes the same quota of 50,000 Soviet refugees set at the beginning of the last fiscal year, plus 11,000 refugee slots never used in 1991.

In fact, 13,320 of the places set aside for Soviet Jews were never used in fiscal year 1991. Why only 11,000 of those places were added to the 1992 refugee ceiling is not yet clear.

Processing Problems Cited

The 1991 shortfall was precipitated by a shift in U.S. refugee processing procedures, Richard Schifter, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, explained Tuesday.

Prior to October 1989, the United States processed refugees from the Soviet Union in Rome. When it began processing them at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, the system was predicated on the Soviets issuing exit visas in a four- to six-month period.

But offices of the OVIR emigration bureau turned out to be more arbitrary in their issuance of exit visas, awarding them to some family members and not to others over a six- to nine-month span.

As a result, the United States altered its processing system in the Soviet Union by waiting for Soviets to receive their exit visas before doing the final U.S. processing.

Mark Talisman, director of the Washington office of the Council of Jewish Federations, said the bureaucratic problems "put big holes in our processing."

But Schifter told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency prior to addressing the State of Israel Bonds Organization's North American leadership conference here that Washington expects the revised system to be working well through all of the new fiscal year.

In September, 4,163 Soviet Jewish refugees entered the United States, the largest monthly total this year. If that pace is maintained through

1992, expectations of reaching the 50,000 mark will likely be realized.

Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel still dwarfs immigration to the United States, but the level of aliyah has dropped off considerably in recent months.

Emigration Barriers Remain

A total of 9,877 Soviet Jews arrived in Israel during September, and the government now expects the year's total to reach only 150,000 by the end of December, much lower than originally anticipated.

Schifter cited Israel's economic problems as the main reason why more Soviet Jews are not leaving for Israel.

But he said the Soviets are still imposing two notable barriers to Jewish emigration: Visas are denied to those with alleged access to state secrets and those with economic obligations to relatives.

So-called "poor relative" cases number in the hundreds, while there remain about 40 "state secrecy" denials, Schifter said.

On the subject of anti-Semitism, Schifter praised Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev for recently speaking out publicly against it.

**BAKER PRESSURING PALESTINIANS
TO GIVE ANSWER ON PEACE TALKS****By Gil Sedan**

JERUSALEM, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- The heat is on the Palestinians to form a negotiating team with Jordan that Israel would find acceptable for peace talks.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is reported to have given the Palestinians until Wednesday to make a final commitment to attend the proposed Middle East peace conference. Otherwise it could begin without them or not take place at all.

Baker gave that ultimatum Tuesday before leaving the Jordanian capital of Amman for talks in Damascus.

He was due in Jerusalem on Wednesday, when he hopes to be able to tell the Israelis that the Palestinians have selected a delegation acceptable to them.

That means, first and foremost, one not visibly associated with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The Palestinians have been engaged this week in intensive consultations in Amman. Participating are representatives from the administered territories, East Jerusalem and a PLO team sent from Tunis.

While the outcome is not yet known, the PLO reportedly has acquiesced to a behind-the-scenes role in the talks. Its executive committee was expected to adopt a formal resolution on the issue Wednesday.

Baker expects to get his answers from activists Faisal Husseini and Hanan Ashrawi in Jerusalem. They are leaders of a small group of Palestinians with whom Baker has conferred on each of his seven previous visits to Jerusalem this year.

On Tuesday morning, they crossed the Allenby Bridge into Jordan, with the full coopera-

tion of the Israeli authorities, to participate in the Palestinian caucus in Amman.

But they were reported to have said Tuesday that the conference terms set by the United States still are not acceptable to the Palestinians.

Obstacles From The Syrians

Baker spent Tuesday in Damascus trying to convince Syrian President Hafez Assad not to jeopardize the conference by making last-minute demands.

Syria, which is supposed to have agreed to attend the conference, is said to have told Baker that it will not make a final commitment before consulting with the PLO.

There were reports last week that even if Syria attended the opening session of the peace conference, it would walk out unless Israel committed itself in advance to give up territory.

Syria tried to pressure Egypt this week to insist that the conference be based on "land for peace."

Cairo has so far declined, because it might put the conference in jeopardy.

The Syrians also are said to have served notice that they will not attend the regional phase of the conference, at which the participants would discuss common problems such as water resources.

Should the Syrians refuse to participate, Israel may well decline to attend the conference.

AS PEACE TALKS TAKE SHAPE, ARAB VIOLENCE HITS A FRENZY By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- An upsurge of Arab violence in the last few days seems to have confirmed the dire predictions of security experts that the closer the peace process nears fruition, the more desperate extremists on both sides will be to frustrate it.

The latest wave of killings began only days before U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived in the Middle East on his eighth peace mission this year.

Two Israel Defense Force soldiers were killed and 11 injured last Friday when a West Bank Arab drove a stolen van into their midst at a shelter for hitchhikers outside Tel Aviv.

The soldiers were buried Sunday, as Baker was landing in Egypt. He has since visited Jordan and Syria and is due in Israel on Wednesday. He is determined to get the agreement of all parties to attend a regional peace conference under U.S.-Soviet auspices before the end of this month.

On Tuesday, a Druse building contractor was shot to death when he stopped to pick up workers at Zabuba village in the northern West Bank. It was one of the rising number of intifada-related incidents in which firearms have been used.

The coldblooded killing also was typical of the methods employed by rejectionists, who hope to derail peace efforts by sowing fear and hatred.

The assailants, carrying concealed weapons, gunned down 32-year-old Jamal Hasoon from the Druse village of Daliat al-Carmel, near Haifa.

Zabuba is a hamlet well off the main road, midway between the West Bank town of Jenin and Megiddo junction in Israel proper.

Hasoon, accompanied by another Druse, arrived there shortly before 7 a.m. The attackers, apparently familiar with their movements, were waiting and caught the two by surprise.

They fled before soldiers arrived. The village was placed under curfew.

Jenin, the nearest urban center, has been relatively quiet since the Palestinian uprising in the territories began in December 1987. Most of the residents rely on jobs in northern Israel.

But the town recently has become a hotbed of intifada activity. Armed attacks on soldiers and civilians have increased. While some of the gunmen have been captured, others remain at large, security sources said.

Cutting Ties To Territories

Druse are targeted because of their warm relationship with Israel since its founding. About 70,000 of them live in 18 villages in the northern part of the country.

Although ethnically Arab, they belong to a sect that split from Islam in the 11th century. Apart from the small Circassian community--Moslem but not Arab -- the Druse are the only minority subject to compulsory military service in the IDF. This is another source of friction with the much larger Moslem Arab minority.

Many Druse share with the Arabs a penchant for vengeful blood feuds. Security forces expressed concern that the family of the murdered man may try to take the law into its own hands. The family has already demanded the death penalty for the killers when they are caught.

In response, Justice Minister Dan Meridor said Tuesday that he opposed capital punishment.

Meanwhile, a committee of Druse mayors issued a statement Tuesday urging the Druse community to cut all ties with the administered territories. They also pledged that the murder would not deter the Druse community in Israel from continued cooperation with its Jewish neighbors.

ISRAEL DENIES FOLLOWING MOVES OF SHIP CARRYING SCUDS TO SYRIA By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- Israel has denied a Washington Times report that it is monitoring the movements of a North Korean ship believed to be carrying Scud-C missiles to Syria and that it may be planning to attack it.

The vessel Mupo sailed from Beira, Mozambique, and is expected to pass through the Suez Canal at the end of the month, arriving shortly thereafter at the Syrian port of Tartus, according to the London-based Lloyd's Maritime International Service, which tracks international shipping.

The ship is reported to be carrying Scud-Cs, an improved version of the standard Soviet-made missile, along with components, shipped by North Korea in a deal said to be financed by Iran.

But Defense Ministry officials here insist Israel is paying no attention to the ship's movements.

The Washington Times cited Pentagon sources as claiming that Israel is keeping close watch on the ship and plans to attack after it leaves the Suez Canal and enters the eastern Mediterranean. The newspaper said the U.S. administration expressed concern to Israel about a possible attack on the Korean vessel.

According to foreign reports, an earlier North Korean ship carrying Scuds to Syria turned back for fear of attack.

But Syria nevertheless is reported to have already received dozens of the more accurate, updated missiles, manufactured in North Korea.

**PROGRESS IN RELATIONS WITH CHINA
REPORTED BY VISITORS TO BEIJING**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- Significant progress toward the normalization of relations between China and Israel has been reported by two Israeli diplomats who just returned from a weeklong visit to Beijing.

At the same time, "a landmark development in Chinese-Jewish relations" has been reported by a World Jewish Congress delegation that was received last Friday in Beijing by two of China's top leaders.

Moshe Yegar, the Foreign Ministry's deputy director for Asian and Far Eastern affairs, and David Afek, who heads the ministry's research department, explained why they see a thaw in Israel's relations with the last remaining major Communist power.

During their five-day visit, the Chinese announced that they would grant diplomatic status to a delegation from the Israeli Academy of Sciences presently in China. Though an academic group, it includes professional diplomats, as does the Chinese Tourist Office delegation in Israel.

So a form of diplomatic exchange does exist between the two countries, Yegar and Afek pointed out.

In addition, the Chinese officials surprised them by announcing during their visit that thereafter they would publicize contacts with Israelis.

For China, that breaks new ground and can only advance the normalization process. Israelis expect Beijing to send a Middle East expert to Israel shortly, along with a delegation from China's Foreign Trade Ministry.

Disgust With Zionism Resolution

Leaders of the WJC delegation reported, meanwhile, that Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and other government leaders expressed strong reservations and feelings of disgust with the 1975 U.N. General Assembly resolution denigrating Zionism as racism.

"It was made abundantly plain to us that China today regards the wording of that resolution as a gross distortion of the truth and a slanderous slur on the Jewish people," Isi Leibler, co-chairman of WJC's governing board, said in a statement issued in Beijing.

Leibler predicted China would dissociate itself from that "repugnant resolution" as soon as it is "politically feasible."

He said the foreign minister mentioned that he has had meetings with three Israeli foreign ministers in recent years: Shimon Peres, Moshe Arens and, most recently, David Levy, whom he saw at the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

Leibler said he was "extremely encouraged" by the warmth displayed by Foreign Minister Qian and Wan Li, chairman of the Standing Committee of the People's National Congress, and by their "sincere interest in improving relations between our two ancient peoples."

Qian further indicated that China would welcome a role in the Middle East peace process, though it is far removed geographically and has no vested interest in the region, Leibler said.

Once the Palestinian issue is resolved, the last remaining obstacles to a far-reaching Chinese-Jewish rapprochement will be removed, the Chinese foreign minister made clear. Leibler reportedly agreed with his hosts to hold a round of Sino-Jewish talks in April 1992.

**U.S. SUPREME COURT DENIES APPEAL
FROM NAZI WHO WAS DENATURALIZED**
By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- The Supreme Court has denied an appeal from an accused Nazi concentration camp guard who was stripped of his U.S. citizenship for lying about his wartime activities.

Michael Schmidt was ordered last year by a federal judge to surrender his citizenship, a decision upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court denied his appeal without comment.

Schmidt has denied any involvement in Nazi crimes, including a charge by the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations that he served as an armed guard at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. He was also accused by OSI of serving as a member of the Death Head's Battalion.

Neal Sher, director of OSI, said that with the Supreme Court denial, "we'll be moving to get him deported." The deportation proceedings would take place in Chicago, Schmidt's place of residence, Sher said.

Sher explained that it has been "routine" for the Supreme Court to refuse to hear such appeals by accused Nazi war criminals and that only once, in the case of Feodor Fedorenko, did it agree to consider the appeal, which it ultimately rejected. He was deported to the Soviet Union.

**NORWEGIAN RESIGNS AFTER ALLOWING
MOSSAD AGENTS TO QUESTION REFUGEES**
By Eli Kohen

COPENHAGEN, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- The chief of Norway's security police has resigned under a storm of criticism for having agents of Mossad, the Israeli secret service, interrogate 10 Palestinians seeking asylum in Norway.

An explanation was demanded by Justice Minister Karey Gjesteby, and sharp protests were raised by representatives of Amnesty International and the Institute of Human Rights in Oslo.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg condemned the incident. He said it was inconsistent with Norway's foreign policy and "must not be repeated."

The security chief, Svein Urdal, said he took responsibility for the incident. He said the security police requested Arabic-speaking Mossad agents to quiz the Palestinians in their own language.

They said they were members of the Palestine Liberation Organization who defected from Yasir Arafat's Al Fatah wing of the PLO because it wanted them to serve as mercenaries for Iraq in the Persian Gulf War.

About 100 Palestinians arrived in Norway last winter seeking asylum, and more than 100 went to Denmark where their request was initially rejected.

The Mossad agents who questioned the Palestinians in Oslo were not identified as such but as "language experts." The Norwegian security police, who do not understand Arabic, relied on the Israeli version of the question-and-answer session, which the police called "conversations" between them and the PLO.

Meanwhile, 125 Palestinian refugees are waiting in Copenhagen, under the protection of a Danish church, for a final decision on their appeal for asylum. The case is currently under review by the National Assembly's ombudsman.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES:**STRENGTHENING U.S.-ISRAELI TIES
NOW A TOP CONCERN OF U.S. JEWRY**
By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- Stemming the deterioration of U.S.-Israeli relations, facilitating Israel's absorption of immigrants, easing inter-group tensions and battling the erosion of church-state separation in America will be among the top priorities of Jewish communal agencies in this country over the next year, according to a policy blueprint released last week.

That document, known formally as the Joint Program Plan for Jewish Community Relations, is published each fall to provide policy guidelines to the 13 national Jewish agencies and 117 community relations councils that make up the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

The Joint Program Plan provides an overview of American Jewry's chief concerns, and the information it contains will shape the way these issues are addressed by the major organizations charged with acting on behalf of American Jews.

One of the strategic goals outlined in the 1991-92 Joint Program Plan urges the Jewish community to convey to the U.S. administration, Congress and other "influentials" its support of an undivided Jerusalem, giving "special emphasis to the fundamental right of all Israelis to live in all parts of the city of Jerusalem, while being sensitive to the traditional ethnic and religious character of the Old City's neighborhoods."

It was a controversial paragraph when it was hammered out eight months ago at NJCRAC's plenum in Miami, where delegates debated the merits of using the word "Jews" instead of "Israelis," and "while respecting" instead of "while being sensitive to."

At the annual plenum, representatives of Jewish organizations from the religious to the secular, from the ultraconservative to the ultra-liberal, from those representing broad constituencies to those representing narrow interest groups, gather to negotiate consensus positions on a range of international and domestic policy issues.

Taking Stands On Israeli Policies

Arriving at positions on which the majority of delegates can agree is no easy task for Jews with such divergent views, as was illustrated in February by the long and passionate debates over several policy statements.

Another which prompted a great deal of debate encourages Jewish leaders to "communicate to the leaders and, where deemed appropriate, to the people of Israel, trends, particularly shifts in attitude, mood and reaction of the American public, American influentials and the American Jewish community, to events occurring in the Arab-Israeli conflict and to Israeli policies and actions."

The controversy centered around a debate as old as the State of Israel itself: what the role of Diaspora Jews should be when it comes to decisions made by the government of Israel affecting the people of Israel.

Those who believe American Jewry has the moral right, even imperative, to let Israelis know what they think of Israeli actions and policies, argued passionately and ultimately prevailed against those who feel it is none of American Jewry's business to try to influence decisions that impact only Israelis directly.

Each of the positions taken by NJCRAC in the Joint Program Plan, and the priority that

each is given, are reflections of the challenges facing American Jews at the time.

Last year, the fate of Soviet Jews in light of the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe was at the fore of concerns and was the first topic addressed in the Joint Program Plan. This year, that position is taken by Israel and the Middle East.

The first of the policies under the U.S.-Israel relations banner this year is to "strengthen the understanding among the American people of the difficult security issues facing Israel."

The second is to "interpret to the administration, Congress and influentials that new relationships between the U.S. and the Arab states emerging from the Persian Gulf crisis should not be allowed to undermine the special alliance between the U.S. and Israel, based on common values, democracy and strategic considerations."

Sections On Environment, Children

Last year and the year before, the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was addressed in the "Peace Process" section of the Program Plan. This year, the intifada has moved out of the headlines and off the list of American Jewry's most pressing concerns, as catalogued in the Joint Program Plan.

The addition of several new domestic concerns to the list of those priorities this year underlines their importance to U.S. Jewry.

The environment gets its own chapter in the NJCRAC policy blueprint. It urges the encouragement of community recycling efforts and recommends that all Jewish agencies "adopt cost-effective internal conservation and environmental policies; and work within the Jewish community to heighten public awareness about environmental issues through education and advocacy."

The Program Plan also for the first time contains a separate section on "Children at Risk." Jewish community relations agencies are urged to "educate the community about problems faced by children in the U.S. and develop programs that reflect the urgency with which these and related issues should be addressed."

College campuses, where some of the country's most alarming anti-Semitic incidents have taken place recently, will be another focal point for community relations activities this year.

NJCRAC constituents are urged to "continue to monitor and assess anti-Semitism on campuses and widely implement workshops for Jewish students on confronting anti-Semitism."

SLAVE LABOR CAMP TO BE MEMORIAL

By David Kantor

BONN, Oct. 15 (JTA) -- In response to protests by Holocaust survivors, German authorities have decided to preserve the site of the Dora-Nordhausen slave labor camp as a memorial to the victims who perished there.

Hartmut Sieckmann, minister of ecology of Thuringia, told the state parliament in Erfurt last Friday that a compromise had been reached that will keep the memorial while mining for gypsum in the region continues.

The German Jewish community was among many groups that campaigned against plans to demolish the camp in Thuringia, where the Nazis built their V-2 rockets in vast underground chambers, using Jewish and other slave laborers.

Heinz Galinski, chairman of the German Jewish community, was an inmate at Dora-Nordhausen.