

**U.S. IS LIKELY TO SET NEW CONDITIONS ON ISRAEL RECEIVING LOAN GUARANTEES**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- Now that the 120-day "waiting period" President Bush requested last fall is up, Israel wants the administration to decide whether it is prepared to guarantee \$10 billion in loans needed to help resettle immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

But rather than give an outright approval or denial to Israel's request, the administration is expected to set conditions for providing the guarantees.

These are almost certain to include some sort of promise by Israel to end or limit new settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There is growing support for such restrictions in Congress, but lawmakers would prefer the administration to reach an agreement with Israel before acting on any legislation.

The administration position may become clear as early as Friday, when Secretary of State James Baker is scheduled to meet with Israeli Ambassador Zelman Shoval.

Shoval is expected to provide more conciliatory terms from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, although it was unclear Thursday whether this would include any restrictions on settlements.

Shamir sent a letter to Baker this week that did not mention the settlements but said Israel was committed to move forward in the peace talks, despite the possibility of elections this spring.

"We believe that we have progressed at a respectable pace," Shamir said, referring to the Arab-Israeli talks held in Washington in December and January.

**Senator Urges Aid Penalty**

The issue of settlements is a concern not only of the administration, but of some powerful members of Congress. One of them is Sen. Patrick Leahy, who, as chairman of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, will decide when and whether the loan guarantees are taken up by Congress.

In a speech on the Senate floor Wednesday, Leahy said the amount of the guarantees approved by Congress "should be reduced by whatever the Israeli government spends to expand its settlement in the occupied territories."

"We must have a way that if Israel continues to increase those settlements, they will lose American aid," he said.

Leahy also said that the guarantees should be limited for the first year to \$2 billion. Israel is seeking approval of \$10 billion over a five-year period, in annual installments of \$2 billion.

The senator also wants to see Israel institute economic reforms, to enhance its ability both to absorb the new immigrants and to repay the loans to private banks, "so that the American taxpayer does not have to step in, in the case of a default."

A spokesman for Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), one of the two sponsors of the Senate legislation to provide the guarantees, said Inouye would work with Leahy.

But Nester Garcia, Inouye's press spokesman,

added that Inouye might not necessarily agree with all of Leahy's conditions.

Leahy also pointed out that the loan guarantees will be provided as part of the 1992 foreign aid appropriations bill. The bill was to have been adopted last fall, but it was postponed when Bush requested the 120-day delay in consideration of the loan guarantees.

Instead, Congress adopted a resolution continuing foreign aid at the 1991 level, which runs out March 31.

Agreement is needed soon on the loan guarantees, because "without an acceptable loan guarantee package, I see no way there can be a new foreign aid package," Leahy warned.

"Even with the loan guarantees, it could be impossible to get a foreign aid bill through Congress," he added. He was apparently referring to the growing opposition to foreign aid because of the United States' own economic problems.

**SHAMIR GOVERNMENT GETS REPRIEVE WITH TSOMET DECISION TO BACK IT**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- The Likud government, deprived of its parliamentary majority, apparently has been saved from the ignominy of being toppled by a Labor-sponsored no-confidence motion next week.

The right-wing Tsomet party, which bolted Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's coalition last month, decided Thursday that it would not support the no-confidence measure, which the Knesset is scheduled to vote on Monday.

With Tsomet's two-man faction behind it, the government can muster 61 votes in the 120-member Knesset, just enough to survive.

Unlike Tehiya and Moledet, the far-right parties that left the coalition Sunday for ideological reasons, Tsomet quit because Likud refused to allow its Knesset faction a free vote on an upcoming electoral reform bill, thereby ensuring its defeat.

But Tsomet's leader, former Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan, who supports reform, had second thoughts after Likud hinted it might introduce the measure it has so far blocked in committee.

Likud insists, however, that if adopted, the reform law must not take effect before the 1996 Knesset elections. The bill provides for election of the prime minister by popular ballot, separate from the party lists. Likud fears this would open the way for a charismatic Laborite or other non-Likud prime minister.

In any event, Tsomet decided not to help Labor overthrow the Likud regime and dictate when elections will be held.

Labor Party Secretary-General Micha Harish said Thursday that Labor would propose an election date as soon as it achieves the necessary majority in the Knesset.

Tsomet's decision does not mean it will rejoin the coalition, though that option is being considered by the tiny party.

Unless it does, Shamir intends to call early elections himself. But he is not expected to decide the timing until the fate of Israel's request for U.S. loan guarantees is clear.

**LIKUD AND LABOR WOULD HAVE TIED IF ELECTIONS WERE HELD LAST WEEK**  
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- Likud publicists gearing up for an early election campaign were dismayed when a leading pollster told them Wednesday that the party would have done no better than a tie with Labor had the elections been held last week.

Moreover, according to Dr. Mina Zemach, a majority of the voters favor a land-for-peace compromise with the Palestinians, a solution rejected by the party's leadership and absent from its platform.

Zemach was invited by Likud to report the results of her latest survey at the opening of a symposium of the party's public relations specialists, who will map campaign strategy.

Limor Livnat, the Likud information committee chairman who introduced her, stressed that Zemach would present an objective analysis of the data culled from the public, not her personal views.

Zemach found it necessary to repeat that caveat when she noted the disbelief and distress her presentation was causing her audience.

"Don't argue with me. I'm merely weighing the data from the public, not arguing with the voters," she said at one point.

"The public wants real peace and is ready to pay for it," she added.

Most voters, veteran Israelis and recent immigrants alike, give top priority to success of the peace process, Zemach said her polls showed.

"The most popular path to peace is through a five-year autonomy period, with 55 percent of the voters favoring a return of the territories afterward" to the Palestinians, Zemach said.

The Likud platform proposes autonomy for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip but does not envisage territorial compromise. It is vague about the future status of the territories, which would be left for "later discussion on a final solution."

**Far Right Gaining Strength**

As for voting patterns had the elections been held last week, Zemach found a slight increase in the power of the far-right wing at the expense of Likud. She said 84 percent of the far right's potential voters are former Likudniks.

Likud's strength would come mainly from young first-time voters, she said, but only 6 percent would be new immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

There would be a small swing to Likud from Shas, the Orthodox party with a largely Sephardic constituency, Zemach found. And there would be a slight defection from Labor to the small left-of-center parties: the Center-Shinui Movement, Mapam and the Citizens Rights Movement.

Of considerable importance to both major parties was Zemach's finding that 25 percent of the voters are undecided with 7 to 8 percent of them wavering between Likud and Labor.

The undecided voters include over half of the 200,000 new immigrant voters, Zemach said.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir got another unpleasant political reminder this week. Housing Minister Ariel Sharon reiterated Thursday that he would challenge Shamir for leadership of Likud and the office of prime minister. Likud is scheduled to nominate its candidate on Feb. 10.

**ONE OF 12 DEPORTATIONS REVERSED AT SUGGESTION OF MILITARY PANEL**  
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- In a surprise move Thursday, the Israel Defense Force canceled the planned deportation of one of the 12 Palestinian activists ordered expelled from the administered territories three weeks ago.

Awad Joude of Ramallah, one of five West Bank residents on the list, was spared by Maj. Gen. Danny Yatom, IDF commander of the central sector, which includes the West Bank.

Yatom acted on the recommendation of the military review panel hearing the Palestinians' appeals. It was the first time since 1979 that the Israeli military authorities have reversed a deportation order.

An IDF spokesman said the appeals board decided deportation was unnecessary in Joude's case because less drastic measures were available to local military commanders to keep him in line.

Moreover, it was pointed out that Joude had no record of prior arrests, except a brief period of administrative detention last year.

The four other West Bank Palestinians and seven in the Gaza Strip whose ouster from the territories was ordered by Defense Minister Moshe Arens on Jan. 2, may carry their appeals to Israel's High Court of Justice.

The order to deport them, for which Israel was unanimously condemned by the U.N. Security Council on Jan. 6, followed the murders of four Jewish settlers in the administered territories by Arab gunmen.

The 12 activists selected for deportation were not directly linked to the murders but accused of creating a climate conducive to such violence.

But many observers in and out of Israel believe the resort to expulsion was less a security measure than a political move intended to appease Jewish settlers infuriated by the killings.

The display of leniency toward at least one potential deportee was overshadowed by the dragnet arrests overnight Tuesday of more than 60 Arabs in the West Bank and East Jerusalem who were suspected of subversive activities.

Protesting Palestinian leaders threatened not to attend the multinational phase of the Middle East peace conference opening Tuesday in Moscow.

**TEL AVIV RESIDENTS REJECT WEST BANK**  
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- Despite the availability of cheaper, more spacious housing in the West Bank, fewer than 1 percent of householders in the Greater Tel Aviv area, Israel's most densely populated region, would consider moving there, according to a new survey by Marketest, a marketing research firm.

The survey coincided with new studies showing that Israel is building housing for Jews in the West Bank at a faster pace than ever.

According to Oded Shay, a Marketest official, the findings contrast sharply with the results of a survey his firm did for a West Bank construction company in 1983.

At that time, 10 percent of the respondents in Greater Tel Aviv, also known as the Dan region, said they were considering or would be willing to buy a house or an apartment in the West Bank.

## RELIGIOUS LEADERS EXPRESS INTEREST IN CONFERENCE ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK (JTA) -- The patriarch of Orthodox Christianity and senior Vatican officials have expressed interest in a proposed conference devoted to increasing religious tolerance in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Central Asia.

Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, proposed the conference to the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, when they met Jan. 2 in Istanbul.

The foundation is an ecumenical group working to advance religious freedom.

The conference would include Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant and Moslem leaders, and could be organized within a year, Schneier said.

Bartholomew I was "strongly interested" in the idea and indicated he would like to host it.

Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran of the Vatican's Secretariat of State and Cardinal Edward Cassidy, president of its Commission for Religious Relations With the Jews, also approved of the idea, but only, at this point, in principle.

Schneier was accompanied on a visit to Ankara, Istanbul and Rome by Archbishop Theodore McCarrick of Newark, N.J., a trustee of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation.

In Ankara, they met with Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel and Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin. They did not raise the idea of the conference with the Turkish government leaders, McCarrick said at a news conference here. But he added that he "would anticipate that Turkish officials would be open to such a conference."

The time for study of religious tolerance is ripe, said Schneier, as regional conflicts grow more violent and political structures and economies weaken.

"There are few places where ethnicity and religious are as closely linked" as Eastern Europe and Central Asia, he said, adding that as political and economic conditions worsen, religious affiliation increases.

### Iran Courting Ex-Soviet Republics

"Some ultranationalists have tried to make the Serbian-Croatian conflict into a religious conflict," he said.

And "there are over 16 million Moslems in the Central Asian republics" of what was formerly the Soviet Union. "They could, conceivably, become Moslem republics," Schneier said.

"The (Persian) Gulf states and Iran are pouring a ton of money into these republics to make them Islamic," he said. "Already, Iranian and Saudi influence is trying to snatch the souls" of the citizens of these new republics.

Iran's foreign minister recently visited the capitals of all six Central Asian republics of the new Commonwealth of Independent States, McCarrick said.

Istanbul would be the ideal location for the conference as a city which literally bridges Europe and Asia, he said.

According to McCarrick, "there is hardly a religious denomination that has not left its footprints in that great city, the second largest city in Europe."

As a secular state, "Turkey could show the rest of the world how to be a Muslim nation without the extraordinary thrust of fundamentalism you find in other lands," he said.

When asked about the country's mixed human rights record, McCarrick said that the conference would be useful "both to celebrate the good things about Turkey and to be a spur to the Turkish republic to move the rest of the way and be more tolerant of their own religious feeling."

Turkey's Jewish community of some 26,000 people has been alarmed at the publication of a virulently anti-Zionist, anti-Jewish, anti-American weekly newspaper called *Son Mesaj*, the two religious leaders reported.

## JEWES CHARGE 'GROSS DISTORTIONS' IN KLM HANDBOOK FOR FLIGHT CREWS

By Henriette Boas and Ruben Vis

AMSTERDAM, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- The Jewish community here is furious over a handbook distributed by the Royal Dutch Airline, KLM, to its flight attendants to acquaint them with the distinctive customs, backgrounds and needs of passengers of different religious groups.

Rabbi Raphael Evers, head of the Orthodox Jewish Seminary in the Netherlands, likened it to "Mein Kampf" and the medieval blood libel because of what he said were gross distortions about the customs and behavior of observant Jews.

According to Rabbi Lody van de Kamp of the Amsterdam Ashkenazic Congregation, it reflects prejudice and lack of knowledge of Jews and Judaism.

"KLM stimulates prejudice against Jews and greatly offends the Jews," van de Kamp charged in the Dutch Jewish weekly *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad*. He demanded appropriate revisions in the next edition.

KLM, Holland's globe-girdling air carrier, has promised to make all necessary revisions.

The handbook, titled "Cultures Aboard," devotes 12 of its 200 pages to Orthodox Jews. It advises female flight attendants that Orthodox male passengers refuse to touch food handled by a woman who is menstruating. Sometimes they will inquire discreetly, or not so discreetly, if she is having her monthly period, the handbook says.

It claims that Orthodox Jews have a sharp sense of social control. "Passengers who didn't order kosher food (in advance) will just demand it on the spot. They call loudly showing their anger over a mistake made by KLM," the manual said.

According to Rabbi Evers, he was upset by the KLM handbook because "negative statements, written or oral, have caused millions of victims for our people." He pointed to errors in references to kashrut and Jewish festivals and to a statement that Jews, unlike Moslems, are allowed to interrupt their prayers.

Flight attendants are told that Orthodox Jewish passengers may want to congregate in the galley to pray and there should be no objection to this request.

But, it warns, sometimes a whole group occupies the galley for a long time, preventing the staff from performing its duties.

"KLM should have contacted the Dutch Chief Rabbinate and the Amsterdam Rabbinate before publishing such absurdities," van de Kamp wrote. He noted that in the past KLM has always asked the advice of Jewish authorities.

A spokesman for the air line said the handbook tried to give as balanced a picture as possible of the more extreme religious behavior the cabin staff might encounter and how to handle situations with which they may be confronted.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:  
RELIGIOUS BILLS ARE HIGH PRIORITY  
ON JEWISH DOMESTIC AGENDA IN 1992**  
By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- With Congress back in session, American Jewish organizations have already begun gearing up for a major campaign to secure billions of dollars in U.S. guaranteed loans for Israel, which it would use to help resettle the flood of immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

But in addition to this goal and the annual effort to obtain billions of dollars in U.S. economic and military aid for Israel, the Jewish community has its eyes on a number of domestic legislative issues.

Foremost among these is a number of religiously oriented bills that Congress is expected to act on before the fall election season.

These include a major religious liberties bill, which the Jewish community is unified behind, and another that has divided Jewish organizations: President Bush's proposal to provide government aid for the purpose of sending children to religiously affiliated schools.

Another domestic legislative priority for Jewish groups is removing caps in last year's civil rights bill on monetary compensation for discrimination based on gender, religion or handicap.

Last year's bill allowed for unlimited damages only in cases of discrimination based on race or national origin. Adding gender discrimination to this list is seen as an especially popular move in a presidential election year.

The highest-profile of the religious issue bills is Bush's proposal to allow six U.S. school districts to serve as pilot programs for what proponents call "school choice." In the areas where those schools are based, economically disadvantaged parents would be allowed to use federal aid to send their children to private schools, including religiously affiliated ones.

Many Jewish groups strongly oppose such use of government aid as a grievous violation of the First Amendment's call for separation between church and state. They also see it as a threat to the vitality of the public school system, which the Jewish community has traditionally supported.

**Orthodox Back Bush Plan**

The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations is among several Orthodox groups backing Bush on the issue.

The Orthodox Union argues that such aid has been denied until now because of a "wooden application of contrived notions of First Amendment principles" that "deny generally available public benefits to certain students and their parents only because they choose secular education in a non-public school setting."

All the groups are united behind a bill that would make it harder for states to enact laws impinging on religious liberties.

That bill, sponsored by Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.), is designed to circumvent a 1990 Supreme Court ruling that states no longer have to demonstrate a "compelling state interest" before barring certain religious practices.

The bill will likely be introduced by early February by Sens. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah).

But the legislation is being opposed by several pro-life lawmakers who are afraid that women will use it to challenge state laws re-

stricting abortion as violating their religious freedom.

Solarz wants to introduce two other religiously oriented bills, including one that would increase the burden of proof on an employer to justify why a worker has to work on the Sabbath or religious holidays.

The other bill would require those who make kosher products to register and file disclosure statements about their products with a U.S. government office. Before Solarz introduces it Jewish groups, notably the Orthodox Union and Agudath Israel of America, will have to resolve disputes among themselves on the bill that have been lingering for months.

**Tougher Law Against Boycott**

Another legislative concern will be enforcement of laws that bar U.S. companies from complying with the Arab economic boycott of Israeli goods and services.

Jewish groups will be working to ensure that the 1992 Export Administration Act increases maximum penalties for companies that comply with the boycott from \$10,000 to \$50,000, as promised by former Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher.

Jewish groups also will be monitoring reforms within the Commerce Department's Office of Antiboycott Compliance, including an increase in staff and training staff to conduct criminal investigations.

A general area of concern for Jewish groups is the amount of government spending on social service programs.

More than \$1 billion in government spending at the federal, state and local levels goes each year to Jewish hospitals, nursing homes, and vocational and family services, estimated Mark Talisman, director of the Council of Jewish Federations' Washington office.

Those programs include Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, as well as funding for low-income housing and food stamps.

CJF is especially critical of a 1990 budget agreement between Congress and the Bush administration that bars money from being transferred from one budget account to another, such as from defense to social services.

If necessary to bolster spending aimed at curtailing poverty and unemployment, the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council would favor tax increases that are "non-regressive," in other words, taxes that soak the rich rather than the poor.

NJCRC is the umbrella policy-planning group of national and local Jewish agencies.

**YIDDISH GETS A BOOST FROM E.C.**  
London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- Yiddish may no longer be the spoken tongue of the Jewish masses, and its once flourishing theater and press have receded into history. But the "jargon" often scorned by educated Jews, has just been recognized as an international language by the European Community.

The European Commission, the E.C.'s executive arm, has given a 8,000 pound grant (about \$14,400) to University College London's department of Hebrew and Yiddish studies to underwrite Yiddish courses.

Department head Mark Geller said he was astonished. "It's a great coup," he said. "We can hardly believe it."