

Iran's Jewish Poor

NEW YORK -- Despite the emergence of a substantial Jewish middle class in Iran and the general improvement of economic conditions in recent years, there still exists a deep pocket of poverty in the Jewish community which requires the continued presence of the Joint Distribution

SOVIETS MAY CHANGE RANSOM

NEW YORK (WNS) -- The Supreme Soviet ended a two-day session in Moscow without ratifying the visa tax imposed on Jewish academicians and intellectuals seeking to emigrate.

The National Conference for Soviet Jewry said this indicated that ratification of the decree issued by the Soviet Council of Ministers last Aug. 3 was not necessary for its implementation and that the Soviet authorities may be considering changing the amounts.

Meanwhile, Yosef Tekoah, Israel's Ambassador to the UN met with UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim &

transmitted to him an appeal signed by more than 500 Soviet Jews calling for UN action against the ransom tax on all Jews with academic education who desire to unite with all their families and their people in Israel.

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Committee and its health and welfare programs, it was reported by Morris Rombro, JDC Director for Iran.

Mr. Rombro, who was in the U.S. for a brief visit, declared: "More than one-fourth of Iran's total Jewish population of 75,000 are beneficiaries of JDC services."

"In contrast to other Moslem countries," he added, "the Jewish population of Iran has remained relatively constant through the years in spite of the steady emigration of close to 2,000 Jews each year. The natural increase in the Jewish population has made up the difference."

Summarizing recent developments, Mr. Rombro reported that in 1971 JDC spent over \$1,000,000 in Iran for schools and kindergartens medical care, feeding programs and welfare services and noted that additional funds will be needed to maintain these programs in 1972.

Mr. Rombro joined the JDC staff in Morocco in 1963 and was appointed Country Director of the JDC program in Iran in 1967. Before

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joining the JDC staff he held a number of executive positions in Jewish communal agencies in the U.S. Mr. Rombro was educated at Bucknell University, the University of Maryland and the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a master's degree in social work.

In Tehran JDC contributes close to 50 percent of the operating expense of the Jewish Hospital which provides maternity, pediatric and gynecology services. It also has a home health service reaching almost 800 families, half of them coming from the provinces.

The feeding program, the third largest of the JDC programs in Iran, provided meals for almost 6,500 children in 1971. A supplementary feeding program was instituted in Tehran providing meals along with instruction in various aspects of hygiene and nutrition during the numerous non-school days in the summer and the many holidays. Mr. Rombro pointed out that for many of the children it was their only meal of the day.



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