

# New Year Message 5736-1975

By Mrs. Charlotte Jacobson

Chairman, World Zionist Org. Amer. Sec.

As we approach the New Year it is obvious that the concerns that have agitated Israel and the Jewish people during the past year will still be with us. On the diplomatic front, Arab activity has intensified and has resulted in the exclusion of Israel from UNESCO activities and from a number of international conferences, such as those on Higher Education and the coming "Habitat" sessions. As part of their diplomatic effort, the Arabs are in full cry in their attempts to have Israel excluded from the forthcoming

sessions of the U.N. General Assembly.

But the Arabs are not having everything their way. Israel's exclusion from UNESCO aroused a storm throughout the world and our own government has suspended its financial contributions to that body while scientists, artists and scholars throughout the free world have withdrawn from UNESCO programs in protest. There has been a parallel reaction against the Arab campaign to oust Israel from the General Assembly, and the free world was encouraged by the refusal of the African states meeting at Kampala to follow the example of the Moslems who, earlier in August, at Jidda, had voted to exclude Israel from the General Assembly. There has been very welcome support for Israel from a wide range of Western nations and even two -- Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia -- from the Communist bloc, led by our own government. Certainly, Secretary of State Kissinger's warning that "those who seek to manipulate U.N. membership...may inherit an empty shell," and his later forthright declaration that the United States will take "definite and clear action" should Israel be excluded, have contributed to the strengthening of those who would maintain the integrity of the U.N. While the issue is far from resolved it is significant that Israel is not standing alone.

More problematic is the fate of the latest round of negotiations between Israel and Egypt, via the U.S. Israel still faces life-and-death decisions, and it is well to remember that even a successful conclusion to the present round of negotiations will not usher in an era of peace and security for Israel, not with Egypt and certainly not with Syria, Jordan, the 'non-confrontation' Arab states, or the Palestinians.

In the Soviet Union harassment of would-be Jewish emigrants grows. The latest blow is the new tax imposed on contributions from abroad: in addition to the 30 percent claimed by the Soviet government as the fee for changing dollars into rubles, a second 30 percent will be withheld as a "tax" on the funds sent to help support visa applicants who have been forced out of their jobs for the crime of desiring to leave the Soviet paradise. Despite its own laws and promises the Soviet government is still holding on to its prisoners; less than half the number of Soviet Jews who were permitted to leave in 1974 have been released in the comparable first eight months of 1975.

At the same time the Romanian government, in response to the urgings of the Congress as reflected in the Jackson Amendment has appreciably increased the number of exit visas being issued and there is the beginning of a new Romanian aliyah to Israel.

While there are serious challenges ahead we are all strengthened by the unwavering friend-

ship of the American people for Israel and the steadfastness of the Congress in its understanding of and support for Israel's needs.


Israel itself is experiencing a resurgence of spirit and is striving to alleviate the social and human problems within its society. Throughout this past year the unity of the Jewish people has been affirmed and demonstrated over and over again.

As we approach Rosh Hashanah it is abundantly clear that American Jewry faces a year of increased challenge. Our response to that challenge must be a reaffirmation of our determination to aid Israel in every way we can -- financially, and through increased aliyah -- and we join Jews the world over in prayers for a New Year of progress, and of peace.

NEW YORK (WNS) -- The 23rd anniversary of the execution of 24 Jewish poets and writers in Moscow's Lubianka prison during the Stalin regime, was marked here with a ceremony on the steps of the Public Library on Fifth Avenue attended by about 400 people.

WASHINGTON (WNS) -- Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Niki has declared on ABC-TV, that unless the national sovereignty of Israel is respected we will not be able to realize permanent peace in the Middle East."

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