

JDC AIDED 400,000 NEEDY JEWS IN 1974

Although there was a decline of more than 40 per cent in the emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union in 1974 there was a sharp increase in the number of Russian migrants going to countries other than Israel.

This was revealed in the Annual Report for 1974 of the Joint Distribution Committee issued by Samuel L. Haber, JDC Executive Vice-Chairman.

"Russian emigration, which had reached a peak of about 35,000 in 1973, was reduced to about 20,000 in 1974," he said. "Of these, 16,000 went to Israel and 4,000 to the United States and Canada. In Rome, where the JDC houses the East European transmigrants, the JDC caseload at the beginning of 1974 was about 1,000; by the end of the year the figure had increased to 1,781 of whom 1,720 were Soviet Jews."

During 1974 JDC aid went to some 400,000 needy Jews in 25 countries overseas. Mr. Haber reported. Costs of JDC programs rose to \$30,550,000, almost \$1,000,000 more than in 1973.

In a forward to the report Jack D. Weiler, JDC Chairman noted that the increased cost were due mainly to adverse economic conditions.

"The devaluation of the American dollar, the revaluation of some foreign currencies and the continued upward movement of prices, compelled JDC to spend \$1,000,000 more than the previous year just to maintain its ongoing programs," he said.

The major areas of JDC operation for 1974 continued to be Israel, North Africa, Iran and Europe. In 1974 JDC spent about one third of its global budget aiding over 110,000 men, women and children in Israel in a wide range of social welfare, health, rehabilitation and educational services. Most of the \$9,800,000 spent in Israel was earmarked for "Malben" the JDC program in Israel. The figure includes \$1,000,000 for aid to more than 150 yeshivot, with a total student enrollment of 22,600, to refugee rabbis and scholars and other religious activities.

To this should be added \$1,350,000 representing the proportionate share of JDC's global allocation to ORT (the Organization for Rehabilitation through Training) which is spent in Israel for vocational training programs, he noted.

A highlight of the year was the inauguration of an institute of gerontology and adult human development at a scientific convocation in Jerusalem on April 21. The program, initially budgeted for \$10 million, is being financed by the JDC, the Ramapo Trust and the Israeli Government. The program consists of a research institute which began operations in 1974, and, still in the planning stage, a nursing unit accommodating 100 infirm-aged and an apartment complex consisting of 50 apartments for well-aged. The apartment complex will contain community center facilities for the elderly.

Another highlight in 1974 was the beginning of an integrated health care program in the Negev. The program involving close cooperation between JDC/Malben, the Ben Gurion University Medical School, the Ministry of

Health, Kupat Cholim and other concerned agencies, will bring to the local communities a variety of health and welfare services in centralized locations.

1975 UJA Campaign

The United Jewish Appeal is conducting its 1975 campaign for \$750 million in the face of the worst economic recession in the United States since the thirties. Yet every effort is being made to meet this goal because American Jews understand the need for the funds both in Israel and in American Jewish communities.

The efforts of the UJA leaders have recently drawn deserved praise from Pinhas Sapir, chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, and Leon Dulzin, Jewish Agency treasurer. Dulzin noted that Jews who make commitments to UJA rarely default them.

Frank R. Lautenberg, UJA's new general chairman, recently pointed out that UJA will be affected by the recession but he did not know how much. However, he noted that pledges are ahead of last year. Lautenberg noted that more American Jews are identifying with UJA and pointed out that UJA must not only raise funds but offer "a Jewish way of life with dignity" and a continuity for the future.

Perhaps most encouraging of all is the young people who are coming into UJA, helping with its tasks and taking over leadership positions. Both Dulzin and Lautenberg stressed this point because it ensures a never-ending chain of Jewish leaders in the United States.

Jews have always felt responsible for one another. The American Jewish community will again prove in 1975 that whenever there is a need American Jews will find a way to help whatever the current economic situation.

NEW YORK -- Louis Kraft, 84, former executive director of the National Jewish Welfare Board, died July 11.

Facts About Israel

(by Warren Freedman)

Israel has 4 rivers (from the 157 mile long Jordan to the 5 1/2 mile Yarmuk) and 7 mountains (from the 3,692 ft. Mt. Meron to the 1,631 ft. Mt. Gilboa).

There are only 296 miles of railroad track in Israel, but over 6,250 miles of highway.

No political party has ever won an absolute majority of the seats in the Knesseth; as a result, all Israeli Governments have been coalitions.

Today 85% of Israel's population are Jews; 12% are Moslems; and 2.5% are Christians.

There are 160 hospitals with almost 30,000 beds--8 beds per thousand of the population.

There are over 2,000 libraries in Israel with more than 13 million books.

The ancient city of Jaffa, with its winding narrow streets and alley ways, has always invited the curious. The biblical Jona departed from Jaffa for remote Tarshish, and during that shipwreck was swallowed by the whale. Even Jona returned to Jaffa! Today the visitor to Jaffa is taken a step back in time. The buildings are still set in labyrinthian alleys, and in the Square of the Ancients there are open excavations which contain several layers of Jaffa's history.

NEW YORK -- A "Song Contest for Youth" to highlight the Jewish cultural significance of the American Bicentennial Celebration, will be sponsored by the JWB Jewish Music Council in cooperation with the North American Jewish Youth Council. The deadline for contest entries is January 1, 1976. Further information and entry forms for the "Song Contest for Youth" are available from the JWB Jewish Music Council, 15 East 25th Street, New York, N.Y. 10010.

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