

U.S. SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

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comed Rabin in a 27-minute ceremony on the White House lawn in driving rain as 2368 specially-invited guests, standing under umbrellas, watched the two bare-headed leaders exchange greetings. Rabin, making his third visit to the U.S. since becoming Premier, arrived from Philadelphia where he participated in a Bicentennial ceremony at the Liberty Bell. Ford, greeting Rabin with "shalom," said that "your visit gives me the opportunity to reaffirm on behalf of the American people the enduring friendship of our two countries, the traditional commitment of the United States to Israel's security and survival and the dedication of the United States to seek with Israel's cooperation a comprehensive and just solution for the conflict in the Middle East." The President stressed that the task of Israel, its Arab neighbors and the U.S. is "to seize this historic opportunity to translate this hope into reality."

In his reply, Rabin noted that in Jewish tradition rain means blessings. He pointed out that he was the first head of a foreign government to visit the U.S. during the Bicentennial and wished "shalom" to "all communities across your great country, including the Jewish community with whom we have a profound, historic spiritual tie." Noting that America's Bicentennial was being observed in Israel, Rabin said "We do so because of the debt that Israel and the whole free world owed to this great country." Rabin pledged his government's efforts to bring peace between Israel and the Arabs. Later at a White House black-tie dinner at which Mrs. Betty Ford danced the hora, Ford applauded Rabin's "statesmanship" that he said had "contributed so much that has been achieved so far" in the diplomatic process.

Rabin's concern about American financial support for Israel is due to the Administration's request to cut military aid to Israel from the \$1.5 billion recommended this year to \$1 billion next year. In an effort to have the \$500 million restored, Rabin took the unusual action of meeting with William Colby, the outgoing director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and his successor, George Bush, at the residence of the Israeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz. Rabin was said to have told them that U.S. estimates are inaccurate regarding Israel's military power and the continually improving strength of its Arab neighbors. The estimates were made by the CIA.

Rabin also discussed U.S. aid with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Treasury Secretary William Simon and members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees. After Rabin's third meeting with Ford, Nessen said the \$1 billion military aid figure will stick. He said the President will request a "very substantial" assistance program for Israel in 1977 which Ford believes "is fully adequate for Israel and meets its future security requirements."

BRUSSELS CONFAB TO FOCUS ON SOVIET JEWS

NEW YORK (WNS) -- More than 1000 delegates from 20 countries will convene in Brussels next month for a World Conference on Soviet Jewry to mobilize international action against the harsh treatment of Jews in the USSR.

Sen. Frank D. Church (D. Idaho) will lead a delegation of nearly a dozen members of Congress. The conference comes five years after the first international assembly on the plight of Soviet Jews was held in Brussels in 1971.

Mrs. Charlotte Jacobson, chairman of the American Section of the World Zionist Organization, told a press conference here that since the first Brussels meeting 112,000 Jews have left the USSR almost all of whom have gone to Israel. But she said that from a high of 35,000 in 1973, exit visas were only given to 20,000 Jews in 1974 and 12,000 in 1975. "A major purpose of Brussels II will be to draw attention to the harsher Soviet policy toward Jews seeking to emigrate and to the Kremlin's failure to live up to the 1975 Helsinki agreement on the free movement of people and ideas," she said.

Meanwhile, Morris Brafman, an American industrialist and founder of the International League for Repatriation of Russian Jews, has written all the delegates to the conference urging them to form a

permanent "world secretariat" to be located in an European city to "work for the defense, support, repatriation and resettlement of every Soviet Jew who wishes to exercise his inherent right to return" to Israel. He said while the 1971

Brussels conference focused attention on Soviet Jewry it was a disappointment because it failed to transform the "noble sentiments and critical resolutions...into a program of political and social action on a global scale."

CHICAGO -- Thirteen prominent U.S. Christian leaders will join with worldwide representatives of Jewish communities in a demonstration of solidarity with Soviet Jews at a World Assembly of Jewish Communities on Jews in the Soviet Union, to be held February 17-19 in Brussels, Belgium.



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