

Passover Message

By Jack D. Weiler
Chairman Joint Distribution Comm.

In thousands of homes in Europe, North Africa and other parts of the world the Joint Distribution Committee will be a symbolic guest and a welcome participant at this year's Passover Sedarim.

The JDC symbolizes the age-old tradition of Tzedakah that has been the major ingredient keeping our people alive and united over the millenia. For over 60 years the JDC has brought aid and hope to impoverished and imperiled Jews in all parts of the world. Its history has been the history of our people, from the war-torn Europe of World War I through the years of Hitlerism and the Holocaust and beyond to the creation of Israel and the building of a homeland for the survivors of Europe and the refugees of Arab and Moslem lands.

This year the JDC continued its unbroken tradition of helping Jews overseas to observe the Passover seder fittingly and in dignity shipping over half a million pounds of matza and 35,000 bottles of sacramental wine. To help the most vulnerable of our people the JDC ship-

ped or subsidized the shipment of additional thousands of Passover parcels to East European communities. In Rome and Vienna JDC will conduct special sederim for hundreds of East European transmigrants - in Russian, with Russian Haggadahs.

Passover has a special meaning for Jews; the retelling of the story of the exodus from Egypt has a deep religious and spiritual meaning. Even non-observant Jews are drawn to the faith of their fathers and take part in the Passover seder.

In the year ahead and the years to come, the JDC will join with other Jewish agencies and organizations to help our fellow Jews still struggling to be free. As we ourselves sit down to our seders in peace and security we think inevitably of our brothers in less friendly lands, under less favorable circumstances reciting the same lines with the same fervor, reassured and comforted in the knowledge that we here care. We greet them on the eve of Passover and join them in praying for their imminent liberation and a safe exodus to a new and free land.

We greet also the hundreds of thousands of fellow Jews here who through their contributions to the United Jewish Appeal have made possible our work overseas.

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By Rabbi Stanley Rabinowitz
(President, Rabbinical Assembly)

Passover in the Bicentennial Year provides the resonance of age to America's Liberty Bell. The bell that pealed liberty's birth on these shores was cast by an English foundry older by two hundred years than the United States, while the inscription on its rim goes back still further to the first Passover whose pattern inspired the founding fathers of our country.

In celebrating the Passover this year, Jews are participating in the unfinished drama and the unending challenge of Jewish history. The cry from the Seder table, "Let my people go," will reverberate throughout the world to assail the ears of the Pharaohs of our day -- sheikh and dictator alike.

Passover's cup of Elijah is Jewish counterpoint to the bell that sounded America's freedom. The message of both must be taken seriously by those who revere their symbolism if democracy is to be preserved in the world.

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- The 4,000 Jews in Rhodesia face potential disaster from both anti-Semitic whites and rebellious Blacks, according to Rabbi Isaac Zwebner, chief rabbi of that central African country.

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