

NEW YORKER WANTS WHITE HOUSE ANSWER ON JERUSALEM

Religion and Aging

BY MARC H. TANENBAUM

NEW YORK (WNS) -- Sam Zalman Gdanski, a New York delegate to the recent Democratic National Convention wants an answer from the White House to a petition signed by 250 delegates demanding President Carter adhere to the Democratic Party's platform on Jerusalem.

Gdanski, a Spring Valley, NY, lawyer and a Rockland County legislator, who was a delegate pledged to Sen. Edward Kennedy of Mass., said the answer will decide whether he supports Carter in the November election. "I was a Kennedy delegate partly because of dissatisfaction with President Carter over Israel," he said.

He said that during the convention he became concerned that Carter "would modify or renounce the party platform position concerning unification of Jerusalem." He formed an Ad Hoc Com-

"Old age is not a defeat but a victory, not a punishment but a privilege. In education we stress the importance of the adjustment of the young to society. Our task is to call for the adjustment of society to the old." Those penetrating words were spoken by my late blessed teacher and friend, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, the great Jewish theologian, during a memorable address before the 1961 White House Conference on Aging. These views are all the more relevant to the 1981 Conference on Aging which is now being organized.

During the next 50 years, America's population will double in the number of its older citizens. We need to face the hard fact that America has been a youth and achievement society, dominated by competitiveness and production of material goods. Both Judaism and Christianity need to help all Americans realize that the worth of a person is not to be measured by his or her usefulness to society, but rather that a human being is valuable in himself or herself.

Care for the old is still regarded as an act of charity; it must rather become an act of reverence, of supreme privilege as it has been in most ancient civilizations.

Religion can also strengthen the older person's sense of significant aging, and provide a community in a caring congregation - sharing friendship and affection and experience in common. As the 1981 White House Conference will seek to make clear, being old is not the same as being stale.

mittee of Delegates concerned with Israel and he and Bruce Levine, a law student from Spring Valley and a Kennedy alternate delegate, began circulating the petition. They got the 250 signatures in two

days. Gdanski said the next day he presented the petitions to the office of White House Press Secretary Jody Powell at the Carter - Mondale convention headquarters but has not received a reply.

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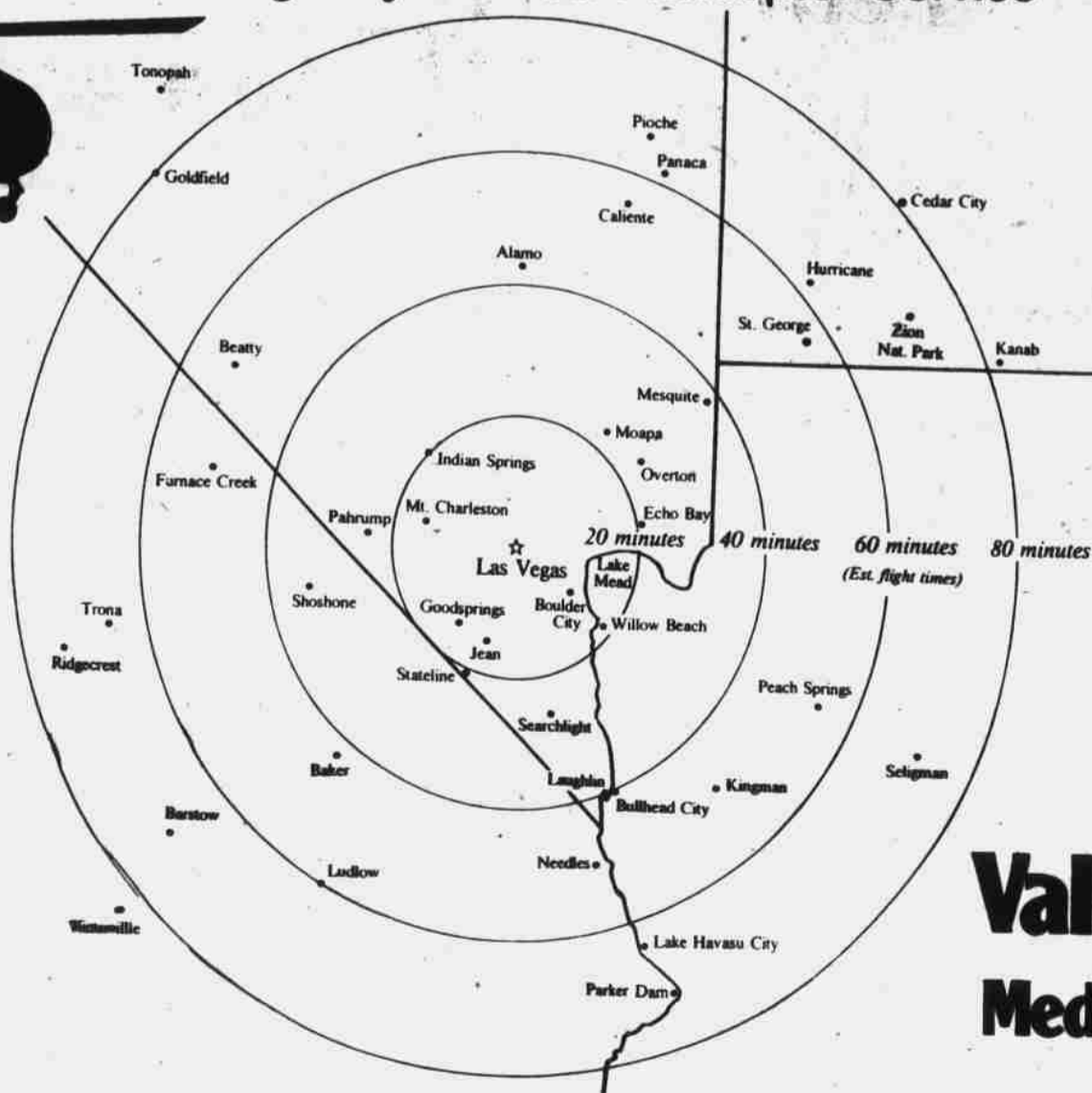


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