

DROPOUT ISSUE IS EXPLORED

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- The Jewish Agency leadership announced that it has reached "a large measure of understanding" with HIAS after marathon talks on the question of aid to Soviet Jewish emigrants who opt to go to countries other than Israel once they leave the Soviet Union.

Unofficially it is understood that HIAS leaders, meeting here with Jewish Agency Executive chairman Leon Dulzin and Agency Board of Governors Chairman Max Fisher, have agreed to accept the Agency - Israel government new arrangements regarding the dropouts on an interim basis. The arrangements are to be reviewed at the end of the year.

The talks between HIAS president Edwin Shapiro and HIAS executive vice president Leonard Seidenman, on the one hand, and Jewish Agency leaders on the other, went on behind the scenes throughout the three-day meeting at the Agency's Board of Governors. HIAS has balked

at the Agency-Israel government proposal that only dropouts with first degree relatives in a Western country other than Israel should be offered aid by HIAS or the Joint Distribution Committee to settle in that country. HIAS leaders had sought to extend the category of first degree relatives -- parents or children -- to at least incorporate those with siblings in a Western country.

But Dulzin, who is the moving spirit behind the new arrangement, strongly objected to broadening the category in this way. He reportedly argued that to do so would severely reduce the prospects of cutting down the dropout rate, which in recent months has climbed to over 80 percent.

Dulzin hopes that the new arrangements which appeared to be deliberately vague and not detailed publicly, will cause a sharp decline in the number of dropouts. He believes that the

rising dropout rate is the chief cause for the recent reduction in the overall number of exit permits issued by the Soviet authorities. A recent statement by the Soviet Ambassador to Canada, Jacob Lev, seemed to bear out that theory (which Dulzin himself has subscribed to for many years.)

FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN REAGAN AND BEGIN

President Ronald Reagan and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin met at the White House on September 9 and 10, the first meetings between the two leaders. The meetings "were marked by friendship and enthusiasm," according to a senior Administration official and a "spirit of calm and reasoned measured spirit prevailed."

In addition to meetings with President Reagan and attendance at a White House dinner in his honor, Prime Minister Begin followed a busy schedule during his visit to Washington. The

Prime Minister met with Vice President George Bush and several members of the Cabinet -- Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury Donald T. Regan, and Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger. He also met with members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In his remarks of welcome for Prime Minister Begin, President Reagan noted the similar beginnings of the United States and Israel as nations of immigrants. "We share a devotion to democratic institutions," the President said. "Our peoples embrace common ideals of self-improvement through hard work and individual initiative. Together, we seek peace for all people. In partnership, we're determined to defend liberty and safeguard the security of our citizens. We know that Israelis live in constant peril. But Israel will have our help."

Prime Minister Begin expressed his gratitude for the

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