

A Critical Moment:

"What Does the Future Hold for Soviet Jews?"

BY THEODORE R. MANN

Concerned with the fate of the Soviet Union's two - and - a - half million Jews, we are asking ourselves some hard questions this week. Will Jewish emigration be permitted to resume under the new regime of Yuri Andropov? Will the condition of Soviet Jews worsen or improve?

It is a critical moment. Twenty percent of the entire world Jewish population resides in the Soviet Union. The change in leadership therefore will affect not only Soviet Jews but the entire Jewish community.

Some say that the situation cannot get much worse than it is. Emigration, after all, has already virtually stopped -- only 168 Jews were let out last month. But that is not so. The situation can get much worse.

Our most optimistic goals can only be reached through a process of negotiation, either between the Soviets and the Israelis, which cannot occur as long as there are no diplomatic relations between them, or between the United States and the Soviet Union, which cannot occur in any meaningful way unless and until relations between the two superpowers begin to thaw.

It would seem to be in the Soviet interest to resume diplomatic relations with Israel. They could thereby gain for themselves a role in Middle East negotiations. The United States has managed to develop and maintain sufficient credibility with most Mideast nations to play a significant role in the evolving political situation in that region. One would think that the Soviets would like to achieve the same status. Nevertheless, they have not done so in the past 15 years, and it is hard to believe that Andropov's ascension to power will make the essential difference.

The more realistic opportunity is that the change of leadership in the Soviet Union might lead to a thaw in US-USSR relations. Jews are let out of the Soviet Union for the same reason

that Jewish dissidents have been permitted to exist there; Soviet leaders believe that the safety of Soviet Jews and their right to emigrate are demanded by an American Jewish community influential enough to make the subject important to American governmental leaders.

Jews have been permitted to leave, therefore, in order to induce better relations with the United States or in order to reward better relations with the United States. At this moment, and for the past two-and-a-half years, East-West relations have been so bad that there has been nothing to reward. And in light of the other very difficult items on the Soviet-American agenda, there is nothing to induce. The Soviets are not likely to believe that if emigration levels are raised, the United States will bend on such critical issues as Poland, the arms race and Afghanistan.

The Reagan Administration has tried to demonstrate to the Soviets for two years now that they cannot over the long term compete with us in the production of both guns and butter; that the American productive capacity is simply too great. One would think, logically, that after two years, the Soviets should be ready, even anxious, to press hard for arms limitations accords.

It is clear now that even if the Reagan defense budget is trimmed somewhat in order to lower a dangerously high deficit, the net result will still be an America with a much more substantial defense budget during the rest of this decade than existed in the 1970s. This does not even take into account the great and growing technological gap between the two superpowers and the resulting superiority of American weapons -- as evidenced by the relative performance of those weapons in the recent Middle East War.

The Reagan Administration's demonstration of America's will and productive capacity may well cause the new leader of the Soviet

Union, anxious to address the very real economic problems in that society, to seek a new kind of accommodation with the United States, a detente without Soviet adventurism. One hopes that the Reagan Administration itself will be equally anxious to reach such an accommodation.

The appointment of George Shultz as Secretary of State -- less ideological and more practical than the President -- will make that more likely. Should that occur, the opportunities for achieving a real amelioration of the Soviet - Jewish condition could improve dramatically.

In the end, it all depends on the reader of this article. As noted above, the safety of Soviet Jews and their right to emigrate depend upon Soviet perceptions -- of an American Jewish community powerful enough, and interested enough, to make the future of Soviet Jews an important subject on the American government's agenda.

We are influential enough. Whether we care enough is the only question; care enough to demand of all our elected representatives, month in and month out, year in and year out, that they help us in this great task of rescue. That depends upon the strength and commitment of the Soviet Jewry movement in all of the cities throughout the United States, and the strength of the Soviet Jewry movement depends entirely upon your personal commitment and cooperation.

Campfires at Mount Charleston will be allowed only in the grills and stoves provided in campgrounds and picnic grounds, and smoking will be limited to buildings, enclosed vehicles, and cleared areas.

Happy Chanukah

**TO THE
JEWISH COMMUNITY**



**Smith's
FOOD KING**

22 E OAKY AT LAS VEGAS BLVD LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	3681 MARYLAND AT TRWAIN LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	574 N EASTERN AT BONANZA LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	
4962 S EASTERN AT TROPICANA LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	3830 W SAHARA AT VALLEY VIEW WONDERWORLD OPEN 24 HOURS	3459 S JONES AT SPRING MOUNTAIN LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	2710 No. Green Valley Pkwy HENDERSON OPEN 24 HOURS
4910 E TROPICANA AT NELLIS OPEN 24 HOURS	232 N JONES AT FREMONT LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	2021 CIVIC CTR NEAR LAKE MEAD LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	6115 W TROPICANA AT JONES LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS
350 N NELLIS AT STEWART LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	850 S RANCHO AT CHARLESTON LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	3750 FLAMINGO AT SANDHILL LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS	1941 N DECATUR AT LAKE MEAD LAS VEGAS OPEN 24 HOURS

OPEN 24 HOURS

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From

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