

**Israeli Athletes Train**



NEW YORK — For the first time in history, an Israeli team will be participating in the gala 1983 International Summer Special Olympics Games which will be held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana from July 12-18 at the Louisiana State University campus. Under the auspices of The Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation, the program, entitled "A WORLD OF WINNERS," will unite more than 4,000 athletes from all over the world, in special athletic competition in 13 official sports. "During this very exceptional week, the spotlight will focus on their abilities," said Michele Bokobza, National U.S. Director of AKIM.

So determined are the eight selected Israeli "athletes" to demonstrate their capabilities to the world, that after a year and a half of regular training at the prestigious WINGATE INSTITUTE, their coaches decided to round-off their preparation with several days of intensive training at the sweltering DEAD SEA. The "champions" will now be acclimated to the expected Baton Rouge temperatures.

In addition to their physical training, the "athletes" have enjoyed working over the past few months preparing a magnificent musical production entitled "HEARTS AND FLOWERS." They have been invited to perform this show of Israeli folklore during the week of the Special Olympics in Baton Rouge. After the Games, the "WINNERS" will be touring and performing in Orlando, Philadelphia, Washington, and New York.

The Israeli "athletes," coaches, and delegates are being sponsored by AKIM, the Association for the Rehabilitation of the Mentally Handicapped in Israel. AKIM, an acronym for the organization's full name, also means in Hebrew "I SHALL COMFORT." Created 30 years ago, AKIM cares for more than 25,000 mentally handicapped children and grown-ups of all denominations.

THE FRIENDS OF AKIM USA, INC. are successfully operating eight chapters throughout the country with national headquarters based in New York City. "We invite all of our friends to join us in Baton Rouge," said MR. PAUL ZUCKERMAN, former Chairman of UJA, who has been elected National President of the FRIENDS OF AKIM USA, INC., "We are all looking forward to sharing the excitement of watching as our young Israeli athletes strive to win, added MR. ZUCKERMAN.

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**LAS VEGAS ISRAELITE SHULTZ'S MIDEAST VISIT YIELDS LITTLE PROGRESS**

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Washington from a tour of Far East and Asian Nations. When in Pakistan, he spoke with President Reagan by telephone and was told to go to the Middle East to obtain a first hand account of Syria's position on not agreeing to withdraw. Israel has signed an accord with Lebanon for an Israeli troop withdrawal, but that agreement remained conditional on the agreement of the Syrians to withdraw.

Shultz arrived in Israel for meetings with Israeli officials after a five-hour meeting with President Hafez Assad of Syria in Damascus at which the Syrian President refused to budge from his opposition to the Israeli-Lebanese accord. Nevertheless, Shultz told reporters here that the Syrians have been careful "to leave the door open" for further dialogue with the U.S. Shultz also visited Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and after departing Israel, stopped in Jordan and Egypt before arriving in Washington.

Shultz had a private meeting with Premier Menachem Begin. They were later joined by Foreign Minister Zitzhak Shamir and Defense Minister Moshe Arens and other senior military officers. The main issue at those talks was Israel's proposed "redeployment" of its forces in Lebanon to shorter, more secure lines. Prior to Shultz's arrival, the Cabinet's Ministerial Defense Committee reviewed plans for redeployment. With Begin as Chairman, the meeting, attended by senior Israel Defense Force officers, examined maps, logistics questions and various alternative deployment lines submitted by Israel's General Staff.

The Reagan administration's position, as reiterated by Shultz, is its misgivings over such a redeployment but was non-committal about the American attitude. He implied however that Washington was not enthusiastic. "We have to look at our key long range objectives and then judge any particular proposal in terms of these objectives," he said. The Administration in Washington prefers the "concurrent" withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon.

Israeli sources here said that the U.S. recognized and accepted the redeployment decision and that the "how and when" of it is "an

Israeli prerogative." However, Shultz did not directly express the American position and there would be further consultations. Observers here believe that there will be no redeployment of Israeli forces until after Begin meets with President Reagan in Washington July 27.

Shultz said he was "pleased" that there would be "a continuing pattern of close consultation with all the parties." This was a reference to the creation in Damascus July 7 of a U.S.-Syrian joint committee on "Lebanese sovereignty and independence" which was apparently Shultz's sole agreement with Assad. The U.S. will be represented on this "working forum" by Nicholas Veliotis, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. But the first meeting will take place only in September when the United Nations General Assembly convenes in New York. Israeli circles took this to mean that the U.S.-Syrian consultations "will hardly be intensive."

Shultz told reporters before departing that he had found universal support for the importance of a strong sovereign central government in Lebanon and it was very good to have that objective reaffirmed. He left the impression here that despite their adamance, the Syrians have reasons to leave the door open and have indicated their desire to maintain some sort of dialogue with Washington, however tenuous if only to retain some degree of independence from the Soviet Union.

NEW YORK (WNS) — Moshe Shechter, director of the Israel Aliyah Center, has announced a national campaign of Israel Aliyah Conferences around the United States and Canada. The campaign has the cooperation and endorsement of over 70 major Jewish organizations. The Israel Aliyah Conferences are intended to increase the Jewish communities' involvement in Aliyah; to provide information about living, working and studying in Israel; and to honor North American Jews who will be moving to Israel.

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