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American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1995-1996.

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*Jwe*

4/30/96

TO: Sylvia Hassenfeld

Thanks so much for tsaking care of this!

Have a good Summer - Spring, too, if it efer really arrives.





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# The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc.

PRESIDENT  
Ambassador Milton A. Wolf

EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT  
Michael Schneider

711 Third Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017-4014

Tel: (212) 687-6200  
Fax: (212) 370-5467

DATE: March 15, 1996

No: 1806

TO: UAHC  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10021

Att: Rabbi Schindler

JDC has made payments in your behalf, as detailed below, and would appreciate receiving reimbursement at your convenience. If there is any additional information you require, please contact the undersigned:

Re: Tallinn Youngsters at UAHC  
Summer Camp.....\$1,200 (airfares)

Very truly yours,

Marla Gold  
Accounting Department

# MEMORANDUM

April 2, 1996

FROM: Edith J. Miller  
TO: Paul Rockfield  
COPY:

Please check to see if we ever received a check from Sylvia Hassenfeld in the amount of \$1,200 to cover the cost of air fares for young people from Estonia brought to UAHC Camps last summer.

Alex has a recollection of such a check, I do not and before I call Sylvia and/or the JDC, I would appreciate your letting me know just what your records show.

*Ask*

*HO-9*

*ask if your division received a check.*

*no they did not*

*no record of a check from her.*

*Handed to FU.*



Union of American Hebrew Congregations

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA

838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100



איחוד  
ליהדות  
מתקדמת  
באמריקה

# Union of American Hebrew Congregations

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

March 28, 1996

To: Ms. Edie Miller  
From: Rabbi Allan L. Smith  
RE: Tallinn Youngsters

We took these kids at no charge. There was no arrangement that I know of to pay for airfare.

/als



**DEPARTMENT OF  
YOUTH ACTIVITIES**

High School - College - UAHC Camps - NFTY - Kutz Camp - Israel Programs  
P.O. Box 443, Bowen Road, Warwick, NY 10990 (914) 987-6300 FAX (914) 986-7185

JHC

December 22, 1995  
29 Kislev 5756

Juliana Sharik  
Tammsaare tee 125-46  
EE0023 Tallinn Estonia

Dear Juliana:

It was lovely to hear from you and I could sense the excitement of the London journey conveyed to you by those who participated. I am truly sorry that you were unable to attend but it was good to hear that you are making fine progress and expect to return to work next month. That's wonderful news.

Jackie Gryn is really the person deserving of credit for making the trip possible as well as so meaningful. She and Hugo are very special human beings.

Rhea and I hope you enjoyed a lovely Hanukkah and she joins me in sending fondest regards to you.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

bcc: Sylvia Hassenfeld

A copy of Juliana's card is enclosed herewith for you really deserve thanks for making this journey a reality. Thanks a million!

Alex



Juliana Sharik

Tammsaare tee 125-46

EE0028

TALLINN

ESTONIA

Tallinn



TALLINN ESTONIA

Dear Rhea and Alex,

My warmest greetings  
for Chanukah!

I hope you're both well.

I'd like to thank you  
for the fantastic trip  
to London that became  
true thanks to you.

I myself couldn't go  
because of an accident  
I had in August. I'm  
still at home and I'll go  
back to work in January.

But the impressions of  
the whole group are marvelous.

And especially the people!  
Everybody says that.

Jackie and Hugo became  
my friends by letters

I have such a feeling  
as if they are my old  
friends.

Thank you again & again.

With my best wishes

Yours affectionately

Juliana.

20c

November 7, 1995  
14 Heshvan 5756

Ambassador Milton A. Wolf  
President  
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee  
711 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Milton:

Once again, a Board meeting announcement prods me to an apology, but as you may know, the JDC December meeting coincides with the Reform Jewish community's Biennial Assembly. It will be my last, my swan song as it were, and of course being with the thousands of delegates of Reform Jews from all over North America, and indeed the world, constitutes a prior claim on my attendance.

Once again, I hope you will understand and understanding, forgive.

I promised before and I say so again, I will make it up to JDC in the future - if God grants me health.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Michael Schneider

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Michael Schneider

711 Third Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017-4014

Tel: (212) 687-6200  
Fax: (212) 370-5467

TO: JDC Board Members and Special Invitees

FROM: Ambassador Milton A. Wolf

RE: JDC Meetings in December

DATE: November 2, 1995

Enclosed please find the schedule for JDC board and committee meetings on December 3 and 4, 1995. Please note that the Sunday, December 3 meetings will be held at UJA-Federation of New York, 130 East 59th Street. The Monday, December 4 meetings will be held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Park Avenue and 42nd Street, and at JDC Headquarters, 7th Floor.

At the Board Dinner on Sunday, December 3 at 7:30 P.M., we will honor Stanley Abramovitch for his 50 years of dedicated service to JDC. Stanley assisted in the rescue of World War II survivors in displaced persons camps in Germany. He also promoted the advancement of education and welfare standards for Iranian Jews and was a central figure in the development of Jewish education and welfare programs throughout Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. He currently directs JDC's Yeshivot Program in Israel and is responsible for JDC activities in the Moslem republics of the former Soviet Union.

At the Annual Meeting on Monday, December 4 at 9:15 A.M., we will honor Mrs. Ilona Seifert for her many years of work on behalf of Hungarian Jewry, and for her tireless efforts on behalf of JDC. Many of you have met her during your trips to Budapest. We will also pay tribute to the tremendous contribution which the Weinberg Foundation, Rabbi Israel Miller and the Claims Conference are making to JDC's emergency relief work in the former Soviet Union.

At our Board Meeting we will be inducting new Board members and paying tribute to those who have completed their terms of service.

I look forward to seeing you in December. Kindly return the enclosed checklist indicating your attendance.



## Honorary Board Members

Dr. Abram J. Abelloff, *New York, NY*  
Joseph Ain, *Montreal, Canada*  
Philip Belz, *Memphis, TN*  
Victor M. Carter, *Los Angeles, CA*  
Dr. Martin Cherkasky, *New York, NY*  
Rena A. Cohen, *Los Angeles, CA*  
Melvin Dubinsky, *St. Louis, MO*  
Heinz Eppler, *Palm Beach, FL*  
Raymond Epstein, *Chicago, IL*  
Pauline B. Falk, *New York, NY*  
Herman Fineberg, *Pittsburgh, PA*  
Max M. Fisher, *Detroit, MI*  
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Emanuel Goldberg, *Rochester, NY*

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Howard Rubin, *Boston, MA*  
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Carole Solomon, *Philadelphia, PA*  
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Jack J. Spitzer, *Seattle, WA*  
Jane Stein, *Tidewater, VA*  
Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, *Jerusalem, Israel*  
Carol Stern, *Southern AZ*  
Susan Stern, *New York, NY*  
Gloria Stone, *San Diego, CA*  
Rochelle C. Swig, *San Francisco, CA*  
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Norman Tilles, *Providence, RI*  
James Tisch, *New York, NY*  
Peggy Tishman, *New York, NY*  
Esther Treitel, *New York, NY*  
Elizabeth Varet, *New York, NY*  
Morry Weiss, *Cleveland, OH*  
Jane G. Weitman, *Greenwich, CT*  
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Joseph Wilf, *Central NJ*  
Maynard Wishner - CJF  
Marjorie Wolf, *Greater East Bay, CA*  
Hon. Milton A. Wolf, *Cleveland, OH*  
Karen Gantz Zahler, *New York, NY*  
Arlene Zimmerman, *Nashville, TN*  
Harriet Zimmerman, *Palm Beach, FL*  
Lois Zoller, *Chicago, IL*  
Louis I. Zorensky, *St. Louis, MO*  
Roy J. Zuckerberg, *New York, NY*  
Larry Zusman, *Dayton, OH*

**JDC**  
**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**  
**DECEMBER 3 - 4, 1995**

**Friday, Dec 1**

**JDC Headquarters, 7th Floor**

10:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Brookdale Board Meeting (CLOSED MEETING)

**Sunday, Dec 3**

**UJA-Federation of NY (130 E. 59th Street)**

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Chairman's Committee (CLOSED MEETING)

9:15 - 10:30 a.m.

Eastern Europe Area Committee

10:45 - 12:15 p.m.

Israel Area Committee

12:15 - 12:45 p.m.

Lunch

12:45 - 2:00 p.m.

Africa and Asia Area Committee  
Public Information & Education Committee

2:15 - 3:45 p.m.

Former Soviet Union Area Committee

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Brookdale Presentation: AN OPEN SESSION  
FOR ALL JDC BOARD MEMBERS

5:15 - 6:15 p.m.

Yeshivot Committee (CLOSED MEETING)

7:30 p.m.

Board Dinner

**Monday, Dec 4**

**Grand Hyatt Hotel (Park Avenue & 42nd Street)**

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Budget & Finance Committee (CLOSED MEETING)

9:15 - 2:00 p.m.

Board Meeting/Annual Meeting

2:15 - 3:45 p.m.

Orientation for New Board Members

2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Investment Committee  
(CLOSED MEETING at JDC - 7th Floor)

**JDC BOARD MEETINGS**  
**December 3-4, 1995**

**PLEASE INDICATE YOUR ATTENDANCE BELOW AND RETURN TO JDC**

**Friday, December 1** At JDC Headquarters, 7th Floor

\_\_\_ Brookdale Board Meeting (**CLOSED MEETING**)

**Sunday, December 3** At UJA-Federation of NY, 130 East 59th Street

\_\_\_ Chairman's Committee (**CLOSED MEETING**)

\_\_\_ Eastern Europe Area Committee

\_\_\_ Israel Area Committee

\_\_\_ Lunch

\_\_\_ Africa and Asia Area Committee  
Public Information & Education Committee

\_\_\_ Former Soviet Union Area Committee

\_\_\_ Brookdale Presentation

\_\_\_ Yeshivot Committee (**CLOSED MEETING**)

\_\_\_ Board Dinner \*

**Monday, December 4** At Grand Hyatt Hotel, Park Avenue and 42nd Street

\_\_\_ Budget & Finance Committee (**CLOSED MEETING**)

\_\_\_ Board Meeting/Annual Meeting

\_\_\_ Orientation for New Board Members

\_\_\_ Investment Committee (**CLOSED MEETING at JDC, 7th Floor**)

\_\_\_ \* Enclosed is my check for \$70.00 for the Board Dinner

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ALL! EUGENE  
RIBAKOFF



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

September 18, 1995

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler  
TO: Executive Vice Pres. Michael Schneider  
President Ambassador Milton A. Wolf

I noticed that you scheduled the JDC Board and Committee meetings for October 22nd and 23rd. Unhappily, I will be enroute to Israel for meetings of the Jewish Agency.

As I told you before, come January 1st my duties will ease considerably and then I will be able to fulfill my promise that during my retirement I will make myself available to JDC and help in any way I possibly can. I continue to consider it the premier organization of Jewish life and it is an honor to be part of its leadership ranks.

Every good wish to both of you for a happy and healthy New Year.



CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
Sylvia Hassenfeld

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SECRETARY  
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Myra Kraft  
Harvey M. Krueger  
Martin Levin  
Leon Levy  
Karen Moss  
Rebecca Newman  
Richard Pearlstone  
Dr. Jehuda Reinharz  
Robert Reitman  
Eugene Ribakoff  
Rabbi Arthur Schneier  
Lynn Schusterman  
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WASHINGTON, DC  
REPRESENTATIVE  
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Ambassador Milton A. Wolf

EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT  
Michael Schneider

711 Third Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017-4014

Tel: (212) 687-6200  
Fax: (212) 370-5467

TO: JDC Board Members and Special Invitees

FROM: Ambassador Milton A. Wolf

RE: JDC Meetings in October

DATE: September 12, 1995

Enclosed please find the schedule for JDC board and committee meetings on October 22 and 23, 1995.

Please note that the Sunday, October 22 meetings and board dinner will be held at UJA-Federation of New York, 130 East 59th Street. The Monday, October 23 meetings will be held at JDC.

Kindly return the enclosed checklist indicating your attendance.

I look forward to seeing you in October and wish you and your families a healthy and happy New Year.

## Honorary Board Members

Dr. Abram J. Abelloff, *New York, NY*  
Joseph Ain, *Montreal, Canada*  
Philip Belz, *Memphis, TN*  
Victor M. Carter, *Los Angeles, CA*  
Dr. Martin Cherkasky, *New York, NY*  
Rena A. Cohen, *Los Angeles, CA*  
Melvin Dubinsky, *St. Louis, MO*  
Heinz Eppler, *Palm Beach, FL*  
Raymond Epstein, *Chicago, IL*  
Pauline B. Falk, *New York, NY*  
Herman Fineberg, *Pittsburgh, PA*  
Max M. Fisher, *Detroit, MI*  
Edward Ginsberg, *Cleveland, OH*  
Emanuel Goldberg, *Rochester, NY*

Judge Edward Goodell, *New York, NY*  
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**JDC**  
**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**  
**OCTOBER 22 - 23, 1995**

**Sunday, October 22** - At UJA-Federation

8:30 - 10:30 a.m.	Chairman's Committee ( <b>CLOSED MEETING</b> )
10:45 - 12:15 p.m.	Europe Community Development Resources Development Committee
12:15 - 12:45 p.m.	Lunch
12:45 - 3:45 p.m.	Area Committee Meetings - Concurrently <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Africa and Asia</li><li>- Eastern Europe</li><li>- Former Soviet Union</li><li>- Israel</li><li>- Latin America</li></ul>
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.	All-Area Forum Property Reclamation Committee
5:30 - 7:00 p.m.	Yeshivot Committee
7:30 p.m.	Board Dinner

**Monday, October 23** - At JDC Headquarters, 7th Floor Boardroom

8:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Budget & Finance Committee ( <b>CLOSED MEETING</b> )
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	IDP Committee
11:00 - 11:45 a.m.	Joint Meeting: IDP Committee Public Information Committee
11:45 - 12:30 p.m.	Public Information Committee
12:30 - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Board Meeting
3:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Investment Committee ( <b>CLOSED MEETING</b> )

JDC BOARD MEETINGS  
OCTOBER 22 - 23, 1995

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR ATTENDANCE BELOW AND RETURN TO JDC

Sunday, October 22 At UJA-Federation of NY, 130 East 59th Street

\_\_\_ Chairman's Committee **(CLOSED MEETING)**

**Concurrent Committee Meetings**

\_\_\_ Europe Community Development  
\_\_\_ Resources Development Committee

\_\_\_ Lunch

**Concurrent Area Committee Meetings**

\_\_\_ Africa and Asia Area Committee  
\_\_\_ Eastern Europe Area Committee  
\_\_\_ Former Soviet Union Area Committee  
\_\_\_ Israel Area Committee  
\_\_\_ Latin America Area Committee

\_\_\_ All-Area Forum  
\_\_\_ Property Reclamation Committee  
\_\_\_ Yeshivot Committee

\_\_\_ Board Dinner \*

Monday, October 23 At JDC Headquarters, 711 Third Avenue, 7th Floor

\_\_\_ Budget & Finance Committee **(CLOSED MEETING)**

\_\_\_ IDP Committee

\_\_\_ IDP Committee and Public Information Committee

\_\_\_ Public Information Committee

\_\_\_ Lunch

\_\_\_ Board Meeting

\_\_\_ Investment Committee **(CLOSED MEETING)**

\_\_\_ \* Enclosed is my check for \$70.00 for the Board Dinner  
\_\_\_ Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend the March meetings

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

July 17, 1995  
19 Tammuz 5755

Ms Sylvia Hassenfeld  
980 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10021

Dear Sylvia:

The thanks are due to you too. After all if it hadn't been for you we would not have gotten to Tallinn.

She doesn't tell me whether the prices in the stores have gone up, If they haven't, maybe we ought to send you and Rhea on another shopping spree.

It was generous of you to offer to pay the air fare for the youngsters now at our camps. As soon as I know what the cost was, I will let you know.

Be well.

Fondly,

Alexander M. Schindler



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

July 20, 1995  
22 Tammuz 5755

Juliana Sharik  
Tammsaare tee 125-46  
EE0028 Tallinn, ESTONIA

Dear Juliana:

I am so glad that all worked out well. As a matter of fact, I stopped in London on my way to Israel recently and the Londoners too are excited about the prospective visit of your young people.

Alas, we have no immediate plans to come to Tallinn although our first visit impressed us exceedingly much. We like your community, we like its spirit and above all the unity which obtains.

If there is anything at all which I can do to help you, please let me know.

Rhea joins me in sending you our fond good wishes.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Juliana Sharik Tammsaare tee 125-46  
EEO028 TALLINN ESTONIA

#13

Dear Alex,

I'm so thankful for everything you've done for our children that I don't even know how to express it.

Thank you very, very much!

Our children are in America now. They like the camp very much and I'm so happy about it. That's all thanks to you.

And our trip to London is planned for October and this dream is going to become true. Rabbi Hugo Gryn and his wife Jaquiline have arranged everything for us, they are so nice and kind. They're planning even too much for us!

And that's again thanks to you!

How are you and your wife?  
Aren't you going to come to Tallinn again?  
Tallinn is becoming more and more beautiful every day. I think you'd like it even more now.

I'm on my summer holidays now and I'm spending them with my husband at a very beautiful place 70 km. from Tallinn. The school-year was very tiresome, I worked a lot and I'm enjoying myself here so much.

All the best to both of you

With my best wishes

Yours  
Juliana.



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

May 16, 1995  
16 Iyar 5755

Eugene Ribakoff  
C/O American Jewish Joint  
Distribution Committee  
711 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Gene:

I have notice of the meeting which is to take place on May 21st. Alas, this is the weekend of our own Board meeting and in consequence, that latter function has a prior claim on my time. All the more so since it is the meeting at which Eric will be designated as my successor when I step down from the presidency a year hence. I hope you understand and in understanding, forgive.

As I told Michael, once my retirement takes place, I will devote myself with full measure to the work of JDC and in consequence you will be able to count on me more than you can for the next 10 or so months.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler





THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, INC.

MEMO

May 9, 1995

TO: Members of the Eastern Europe Area Committee

FROM: Gene Ribakoff, Chairman  
Alex Grass, Co-Chair  
Harvey Schulweis, Co-Chair

RE: Eastern Europe Area Committee Meeting - Sunday, May 21, 1995

We are pleased to enclose the agenda for our upcoming Eastern Europe Area Committee meeting, which will take place on Sunday, May 21 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. at UJA-Federation of New York, 130 East 59th Street.

We have also included several items that we think will be helpful for you to review in advance of the session, all of which will be included in the kits to be distributed at the meeting. Please note that we will be having discussions about the establishment of a separate Albania country budget and the budget of the Balint Jewish Community Center in Budapest. As you know, World Jewish Relief (formerly the Central British Fund) played a vital role in the establishment of the BJCC, and we are delighted that Cheryl Mariner, Executive Director of WJR, will be joining us.

On Monday, May 22 from 10:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m., there will be a Special Session on Community Development which will address issues relevant to Jewish communities in Central and Eastern Europe. We hope that you will be able to attend.

Should you have any questions regarding the materials or the upcoming meeting, please contact Merri Ukraincik, Desk Officer, at JDC.

We look forward to seeing you on May 21.

# MEMORANDUM

One Page FAX

April 27, 1995  
27 Nisan 5755

TO: RICHARD S. SECLOW

FROM: EDIE MILLER

At Rabbi Schindler's request, herewith is the name of the leader of the Talinn Jewish community:

Gennadi Gramberg

Office phone #: 438-566

The JDC office here in New York is trying to get an update and possibly an additional name or two but have not had a response from their contact, the staff person in Paris who handles Estonia as he is or was in Israel. Should I receive any further information in the next day or two I'll fax it to you.

Have a good trip.



Union of American Hebrew Congregations

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International Advisor To  
The Private & Public Sectors

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Westport, CT 06880  
U.S.A.

(203) 227-7385  
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4/12 -  
Please call Joe / 687  
and find out / 6200  
the names & address  
of some of the  
~~some~~ leaders  
(one or two names)  
of the TARIK (ESTORIA)  
JEWISH COMMUNIT  
THEN FAX TO  
DICK SECLOW  
(see above)  
He's going there.



JDC

✓

April 25, 1995  
25 Nisan 5755

Sara Hirschhorn, Director  
Israel Desk, JDC  
711 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10017-4014

Dear Sara:

Thank you so much for sending me the material on the  
Ethiopians. I appreciate your assistance.

With warm good wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



הסוכנות היהודית לארץ-ישראל  
The Jewish Agency for Israel

המחלקה לעליה וקליטה • Department of Immigration and Absorption

לשכת המנהל הכללי • Office of the Director General

Jerusalem  
March 7, 1995

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler  
President  
U.A.H.C.  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10021-7064  
USA

Dear Alex,

I received a copy of your letter to Michael Schneider. Thank you for your very kind words and good wishes on my appointment as Director of the JDC in Israel.

It isn't an easy thing to leave the Aliyah Department and the Jewish Agency but there will be many challenges to be met in my new position and I'm sure it will be a rewarding experience.

Your words have a great deal of meaning for me and I have always considered your advice to be sound. I know that your support and assistance will make my new job much easier and I look forward to our continued working together in this new capacity.

Warm regards.

Sincerely,

Arnon Mantver



THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, INC.

MEMO

March 8, 1995

f.m.

TO: Members of the Eastern Europe Area Committee

FROM: Gene Ribakoff, Chairman

RE: Updates on JDC Programs in Eastern Europe

It seems that the year has just begun, and JDC has already achieved so much, both in terms of ongoing programs as well as innovative new projects. I am pleased to enclose materials that will give you an overview of developments in Eastern Europe, and will clarify various issues that have been reported on at our meetings. As you know, our area committee will not be convening during the upcoming meetings.

You will find enclosed excerpts from field trip reports on Albania, Belgrade, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, and Poland, as well as excerpts from a report on activities in Hungary. Also included is a Time (International Edition) article on Eastern Europe featuring photographs by Ed Serotta, and an article, translated from the Romanian original which appeared in *Libertatea*, on the Martin Balus Home in Bucharest. Finally, there is a JTA article about the recent JDC-CBF visit to Belgrade and the situation of the Jewish community there. Jonathan Kolker and Norman Tilles, who participated as part of the delegation, represented the JDC Board.

In keeping you up-to-date on the situation in Romania, I want to let you know that FEDROM's Advisory Council, charged with selecting a new Chief Rabbi for Romania, has decided to delay the selection and announcement of a new Chief Rabbi until the yaahrzeit of the late Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen, which will be on May 28. The Advisory Council continues the selection process with JDC guidance.

Another interesting development was the recent visit by Manlio Dell'Ariccia to Albania, where he succeeded in meeting most of the remaining Jews. As many of you know, most of the Albanian Jewish community went on aliyah in 1991. Manlio's trip was an initial visit by JDC staff, and his touching and informative report paints a clear picture of the situation of the Jewish community and of the country overall.

If you have any questions about any of the materials, please contact Merri Ukraincik at JDC.



FEBRUARY 6, 1995

GLOBAL MARKETS  
RUNNING SCARED

# TIME

## Reawakening

Fifty years after the Holocaust,  
Jewish life blossoms anew in Eastern Europe

At a Shabbat  
dinner in a  
Berlin school



9 770959 502023

BAHRAIN BD 1.400 EGYPT £ 1.400 GIBRALTAR £ 1.400 IRAN R 6000.00 JORDAN JD 2.200 KENYA KSh 200.00 LEBANON L 1.100 LITHUANIA Lt 1.100 LUXEMBOURG LUF 150 MALAYSIA M 1.100 MEXICO M 1.100 MOROCCO M 1.100 NETHERLANDS f 1.100 NIGERIA N 100.00 PORTUGAL C 1.100 ROMANIA R 1.100 SAUDI ARABIA S 1.100 SLOVAKIA S 1.100 SLOVENIA S 1.100 SWEDEN S 1.100 SWITZERLAND S 1.100 SYRIA S 1.100 TAIWAN NT 1.100 THAILAND TH 1.100 U.S. & POSSESSIONS \$ 1.100 U.K. & POSSESSIONS £ 1.100



■ CULTURES

# A JEWISH REAWAKENING

Neither Nazis nor communists could wipe out the Jews of Eastern Europe. Now their faith is b



FAITH REBORN: In Berlin, where the Final Solution was once planned, a new generation of children reared in the religion of their forebears enjoy taking part in



# KENING

their faith is blossoming again



ers enjoy taking part in such traditional rituals as Purim

By JAMES O. JACKSON

*He shall reconcile fathers with sons and sons with their fathers.  
—The Book of Malachi*

**E**VEN A BIBLICAL PROPHET COULD not have foreseen the cataclysms the 20th century would visit on the Chosen People. The Jews of Europe would come close to extinction in the Nazi Holocaust. Many of the traumatized survivors would be repressed and secularized by more than four decades of communism. The fathers would be forced to turn away from their faith, and their children would grow up in ignorance of it.

For all that, Malachi's prophecy is coming true. Fifty years ago last week, the Soviet troops opened the gates of Auschwitz, the Third Reich's most heinously efficient death camp where millions died, and discovered the full horror of Hitler's Final Solution. Yet today Jewish identity in Central Europe is taking root in the very soil on which the vast majority of the 6 million perished. The young are discovering their Jewish heritage. And they, in confirmation of the prophecy, are bringing Judaism back to the parents whose faith had been so ruthlessly stamped out by one dictatorship after another for half a century.

In Budapest, Prague, Warsaw, Moscow, Bratislava, Berlin, in hundreds of towns and villages from the Baltic to the Black Sea, Jewish communities are re-emerging and coming together in a kind of Continental minyan, the quorum required for the holding of religious services. Synagogues and schools are rising again, some on the foundations of Jewish institutions dating from the Middle Ages. Jews are proudly calling themselves Jews once more, reviving traditions and cultures long buried in the ashes of Hitler's ovens or under the weight of communist oppression. "That now there is the possibility to be a Jew is mystical," says 18-year-old Igor Czernikow, one of the founders of a Jewish youth club in Wroclaw in Poland's Silesia. "It's an historic change, in the history of our nation and the history of the individual."

The regrowth of Judaism is not unprecedented. The Jews of Persia survived the violence under the regime of Ahasuerus, the Jews of Europe outlasted the Inquisition, and pogroms failed to wipe out the Jews of the Russian Empire. Yet cruel as generations of persecutions were, all stopped short of the Nazi attempt at genocide. There were 8.3 million Jews in Eastern and Central Europe before the rise of Hitler. Some 450,000 fled the Nazis before World War II. More than 5 million died in the Holocaust. After

the war a few hundred thousand of the survivors left immediately for Israel, Western Europe or the U.S.; an additional 265,000 managed to emigrate from the Soviet Union between the mid-'60s and the early '80s; and still more headed West when communism collapsed in 1989.

Left behind in the former heartland of European Jewry were 2 million, the dim shadow of a once vibrant community. Many were the elderly who could not face or afford the rigors of emigration. But most were the assimilated children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren—generations so thoroughly absorbed and secularized that their Jewishness seemed to consist of little more than distinctive surnames and distant memories.

Yet since the Iron Curtain was lifted and communism banished from the Soviet bloc, the lost generations of Jews are being found. Renewed interest in Judaism is part of a broad search for spirituality that has sprung up in Eastern European countries in the desert that was created by the demise of a discredited ideology. "People are coming out of the woodwork and announcing they are Jewish," says David Lerner, a British educator who helped found a Sabbath school in Minsk. "Six years ago, Jews were still being beaten up in Minsk. Now there are three religious congregations, the Sabbath school, a youth movement and a voluntary welfare organization."

It is the young, especially, who are discovering their Jewishness. "In the very place where the Nazis created Auschwitz, we have young Jews trying to reclaim their heritage," said Rabbi Michael Schudrich of the American Lauder foundation as he opened the latest youth center last week in Cracow, Poland. "Many did not even know five years ago that they were Jewish."

In Budapest the 118-year-old Rabbinical Seminary, the only one in Eastern Europe, is training a new generation of religious leaders for Hungary. One young believer is student Rafael Röhrig, 27, who says he came from an orthodox family—orthodox communist, that is. "It wasn't until I traveled to America and Israel that I met Jews who dedicated their lives to God," he says. "That was something none of us had seen in Hungary. We had to leave to find it."

Now some of the younger Jews are drawing their elders back to the faith. "My parents never had a special religious attitude before," says Zoltan Radanyi, 21, who is studying at the Budapest Pedagogium, an institution allied with the seminary, to become a religion teacher. "They read every book I read in class. When we go to synagogue together, I often advise my father on what Scripture to read."

The Budapest seminary building now houses the Anne Frank High School, a 76-



year-old institution that taught more than 1,000 students a year before the German Occupation. The Nazis turned the high school's original building into a military hospital in 1944, and during the communist era the authorities took it over as an ordinary state school. The few remaining Jewish students moved into the seminary. In 1962 only two Jewish students graduated, and the school came very close to shutting down. But it endured, changed its name to honor the Dutch schoolgirl-diarist who was murdered by the Nazis, and is now jammed to capacity with 200 students who get lessons in Hebrew, Jewish history and Bible study as well as regular subjects. They came to Anne Frank, says director Rozsa Berend, "because they wanted to be Jewish."

munist government. Barely 5,000 remain. Yet kosher food, Yiddish theater and Jewish-history studies are becoming more popular.

Polish schools are beginning to deal with the long-suppressed history of the country's Jews. The mournful music of Golda Tencer, a singer at Warsaw's Yiddish Theater for 23 years, is occasionally featured on television. Last year 120 non-Jewish children signed up to learn her music. Tencer recalls a recent essay contest sponsored by the Polish ministry of education on the subject "One Thousand Years of Jews in Poland." "We thought maybe 100 or 200 would participate," she says. "There were 4,000."

Perhaps the oddest indication of Polish

## Jews are proudly calling themselves Jews once more, reviving

The past few years have seen a surge of interest in Judaism among non-Jews as well, especially in the countries with the smallest surviving Jewish communities: Poland, the Czech Republic and Germany. "In this country, if you're Jewish, everybody loves you," says Sylvie Wittmann, a tour guide who takes groups through Josefov, the old Jewish quarter of Prague. "They think you're Franz Kafka."

Jan Rott, 73, a Prague architect and writer, is astonished at the revival. "For 50 years only a few circumcisions were done here," he says. "It was difficult to gather the 10 men required to hold Sabbath prayers." Now Prague's Altneu Schul, the main synagogue, holds services daily, and three study groups meet weekly to explore Jewish religion and culture. "My grandchildren," says Rott, "know more about being Jewish than my children do."

**A**LTHOUGH PRAGUE'S JEWISH community is minuscule—numbers range from the officially registered 1,400 up to an estimated 3,000—hundreds more are showing an interest in finding Jewish roots or, for those who have none, in converting. At Beit Simcha, or House of Joy, a Jewish cultural center founded by Wittmann, as many as 200 young people turn up for holidays or social gatherings. It is impossible, she says, to know how many are actually Jews. "Most of the young people don't have any Jewish background," she says. "What they know comes from reading magazines."

Even more remarkable is Poland's renewed interest in Judaism, despite the fact that very few Jews still live there. Only 300,000 Polish Jews out of a prewar population of 3.5 million survived the Holocaust, and nearly all of those emigrated in the 1950s under pressure from the com-

interest in things Jewish is a craze for kosher drinks. The hottest-selling alcoholic beverage is "kosher vodka," with a label showing bearded rabbis in prayer shawls and Polish names in Hebrew-like lettering. There is also kosher beer and even kosher mineral water, not generally required of even the most orthodox of Jews, who are content to drink tap water.

In Germany, the very heart of the Holocaust, so-called philo-Semitism is widespread. Berlin ranks just after New York City and Los Angeles as a center for klezmer music, the clarinet-based tunes traditionally played at Jewish weddings and gatherings. The Institute for Judaism, part of the Free University of Berlin, has 122 students, none of them Jews, enrolled in its classes on religion, history and Israeli politics. Some young Germans with no Jewish background are even choosing to convert.

But in much of Eastern Europe it is Jews themselves who need to investigate their heritage. In Moscow, Maureen Greenwood, a project coordinator for an American Jewish human-rights organization, described a U.S. rabbi's shock upon finding a Russian Orthodox icon in a Jewish family's living room. "The reason," says Greenwood, "is that all religion was so repressed. Jews and Christians were all in the same boat. People simply want to satisfy their religious longings."

The need to reintroduce children to their ancient culture is especially urgent in Russia, where 70 years of repression and assimilation obliterated Jewish consciousness more completely than almost anywhere else. "The children should feel at home, among their own," says Zev Kyravsky, founder of the Achei Tmimim Chabad Lubavitch school in Moscow. "They should receive the education their parents could not get."



Jews once more, reviving



ROOTS: The restoration of graves in a cemetery in Prague is only





**THE POWER OF PRAYER:**  
The young woman lighting a candle in Prague's Jerusalem synagogue on Friday night is only one of many newcomers to the daily services and regular study groups that have revived an interest in Judaism even where very few Jews remain

**TRAINING A NEW GENERATION:**  
From the Baltic to the Black Sea, reawakened Jews are gathering to learn the ways of their people in study classes like the one taught by Rabbi Michael Schudrich at the Lauder Educational Center in Warsaw

reviving traditions buried in the ashes of Hitler's ovens



Prague is only one of the ways the revitalized remnants of the ancient community are openly embracing their heritage





**THE AGONY CONTINUES:**  
A Jewish boy, left, who had been living in Sarajevo cries as he waits for a bus convoy last February to take him out of that war-torn city. The boy now lives in Jerusalem. His father stayed behind, and the youngster has not seen his mother in years

**REFUGEES AGAIN:**  
A Jew brings his suitcases to a Sarajevo synagogue before leaving on a bus convoy arranged by the American Joint Distribution Committee, a Jewish organization, to get people out of Sarajevo. Some 400 Jews still live in the city

## For all the hopes, a current of fear and pessimism lurl



Many of Russia's Jews are flocking to Berlin and Hamburg, where Jewish communities once existed, in search of opportunity. At the beginning of 1992, the official count for the Jewish community in Germany was about 34,000. Since then another 20,000 have arrived from the East, and more are expected at a rate of about 10,000 a year for the foreseeable future.

That is the most significant change in the community since the end of World War II, and it is upsetting to those who believe that Jews who leave Russia should be going to Israel, even the U.S., but in no case to Germany. "They are going from one hell to another," says Dov Shilansky, a member of the Israeli parliament from the rightist Li-

kud group. "They are living next to people who killed their brethren." But many of those who live in Germany argue that they have a right, even a duty, to remain. "If all of us fled Germany," says Shlomit Tulgan, a student in Berlin, "then Hitler would have achieved his desire of making Germany free of Jews. We can't let that happen." Serge Klarsfeld, the French Nazi hunter, believes the Jews belong in Eastern Europe despite the Holocaust: "To live in Cracow, in Prague or in Budapest is not to live with assassins. It is to live with the memory of Jewish life that once flourished there."

The Jewish renaissance in those areas must overcome more than the horrors of Nazism. Even before the repressions of the 20th century, large numbers of Central European Jews chose integration and assimilation as a means of easing conflict with Christian society. In Hungary especially, full assimilation was the pattern in the urban professions. During the so-called *Bekabeli*—the "time of peace" from about 1870 to World War I—many of Hungary's university professors were Jewish by birth but had repressed that fact, sometimes even accepting Christian baptism.

After World War II, Hungary's 100,000 survivors found themselves living under a communist regime that suppressed religion of any kind. Intolerance once again turned to deadly persecution across Eastern Europe when Jewish physicians were accused in 1953 of attempting to poison a number of high-level Soviet government officials. Having survived the war, many Jews throughout Eastern Europe came to a terrible conclusion: whatever the regime, it was best not to be Jewish at all. "If they spit at you long enough, you feel like you must really be guilty of something," says Anne Frank School director Berend. "Most of the Jews of my generation went through that psychological misery."



They tried to erase their Jewishness or, failing that, hide it from their children. Matyas Eorsi, a member of Hungary's National Assembly, remembers how his father changed his name from the plainly Jewish Schleiffer to the indeterminate Eorsi. Years later, when the elder Eorsi was in the late stages of Alzheimer's disease, his son found him one day weeping and uttering his first cogent words in months: "I am Jewish." That, says Eorsi, "was the one fact that seemed to have survived in his ravaged mind."

For all the hopeful revival, a current of fear and pessimism lurks beneath the surface. Anti-Semitism and nationalism stir memories of pogroms past. "It is still possible to be frightened," says Alla Gerber, a Jewish

## cs beneath the surface

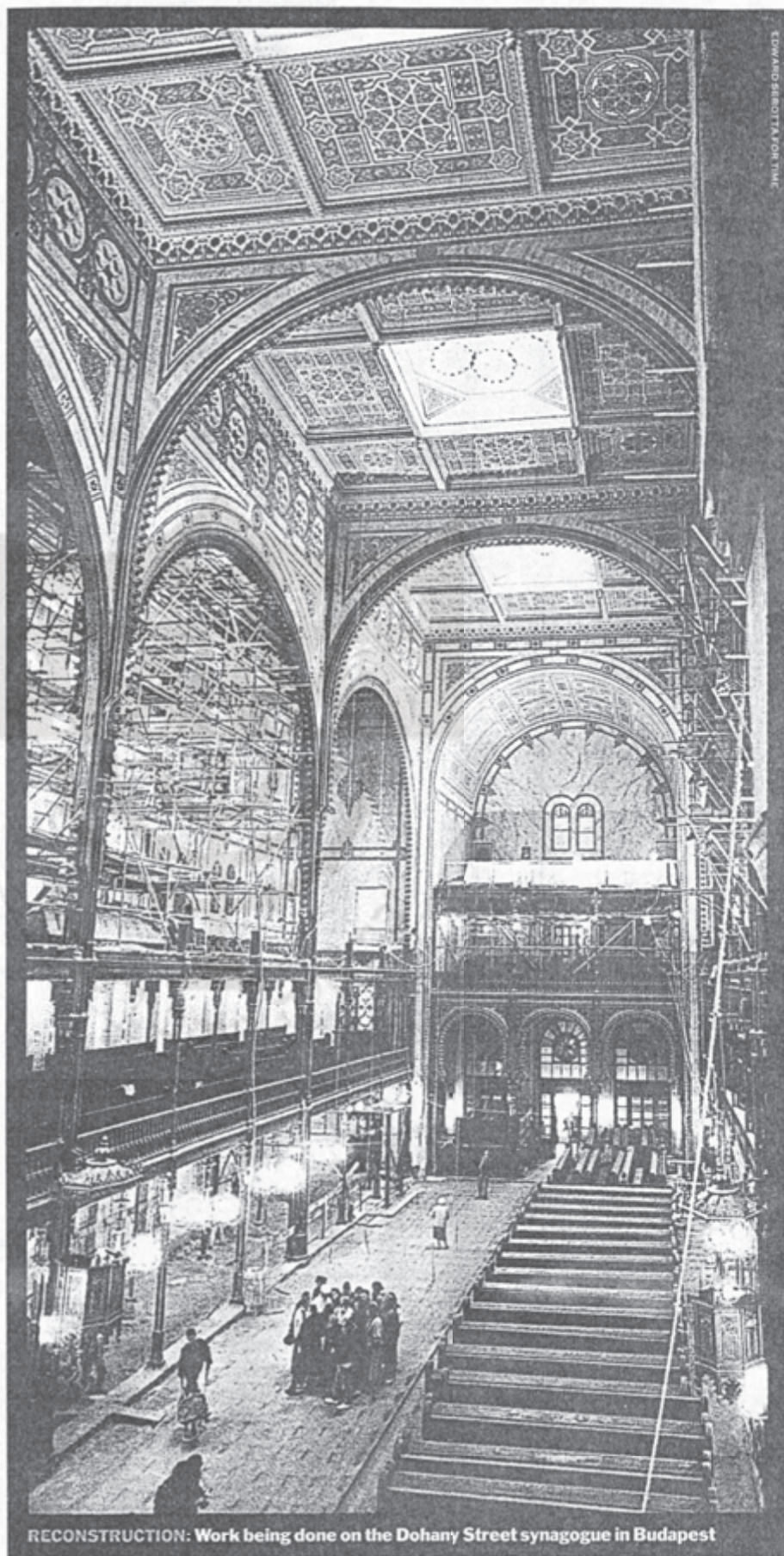
member of the Russian parliament. "There is a feeling that we are guests who should leave on time." Berend, in Budapest, says there have been anti-Semitic overtones in recent election campaigns, such as the word *ZSIDO* (Jew) scrawled on posters of the Liberal Democrats. "Things seem good now," she says, "but no one knows what will happen if the economy keeps going down and people start clamoring for a strongman. The Jews could still end up paying a bitter price."

Even without resurgent anti-Semitism, nobody believes Jewish life in Central Europe will ever be what it was before the Holocaust. The world of the *shtetl* is lost; the Yiddish language is becoming as inaccessible as Welsh or Aramaic; the Jews of Marc Chagall's paintings are gone forever. "You cannot revive Jewish culture here," says Russia's Gerber. "You cannot revive something that is finished." Others are troubled that the youthful embrace of Judaism is only rarely a question of faith. "A lot of them want to be Jewish without the religion," complains Rabbi Jozsef Schweitzer, head of Budapest's Rabbinical Seminary. "We as rabbis want the end station of this renaissance to be synagogue Jews, not club Jews."

Perhaps it is a mistake, though, to measure the quality of the Jewish revival merely by counting heads in the synagogue. American photojournalist Edward Serotta, who has spent the past 10 years chronicling the revival of Judaism in Central Europe and whose work appears on these pages, recalls an incident in northern Romania where he met a kosher butcher who traveled four days a week to deliver meat to just 30 families. "I asked him, 'How can such small numbers count?' He chuckled and looked at me as if I'd asked an enormously stupid question. 'Numbers don't count.'"

—Reported by

Jeremy Frankel/Berlin, James L. Graff/Budapest, Nomi Morris/Warsaw and Constance Richards/Moscow, with other bureaus



RECONSTRUCTION: Work being done on the Dohany Street synagogue in Budapest



BEHIND THE HEADLINES**Four years after war begins,  
Jews of Belgrade feel cut off***By Edward Serotta*

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (JTA) — Nearly four years after war broke out among the republics of the former Yugoslavia, the Jews of Belgrade feel cut off from the world.

Since the start of the war in 1991, triggered by the secession of the former republics of Slovenia and Croatia, Belgrade's bustling and proud Jewish community of 1,800 Jews has had to cope with the same grim realities affecting the rest of the country's population.

Soon after the war broke out, international trade sanctions were imposed upon Serbia and Montenegro, the two republics comprising what remains of Yugoslavia. The sanctions created shortages of food, medicine and other necessities.

But the Jews of Belgrade, while trying to stem the ruinous effects of trade sanctions and rampant inflation on their own community, have also managed to help others.

Working in conjunction with SAVEZ, the Federation of Yugoslav Jewish Communities, the Belgrade Jewish community has helped nearly 1,000 refugees from the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo.

Despite their efforts, most media attention has focused on the Jewish community of Sarajevo, which took on the role of a humanitarian relief agency helping residents of the war-torn city, regardless of their religious or political affiliation.

The Sarajevo Jewish community also garnered headlines after it helped arrange convoys that transported Jews and non-Jews alike far from harm's way.

In contrast, the Jews of Belgrade, continuing their own non-political humanitarian efforts, found themselves far from the spotlight of the world's attention.

Jews here also found themselves in a particularly difficult position because Serbia has been portrayed by the international media as the main aggressor in the brutal war in Bosnia, which erupted in 1992.

'We leave our politics outside the door'

During a visit late last month by delegations from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Central British Fund for World Jewish Relief, the president of Belgrade's Jewish community spoke proudly of how Belgrade's Jews had opened their community center and homes to Bosnian Jewish refugees.

Working with funds as well as guidance from JDC and the British Fund, the community has "received 980 Bosnian Jews over the past three years, and 200 chose to remain with us in Belgrade and Novi Sad," said the president, Brane Popovic.

"We leave our politics outside the door of this community center," he said, "and we come here, just as we always did, to be together as Jews."

The community here has felt particularly isolated since the recent death of the longtime president of SAVEZ, Dr. Ladoslav Kadelburg. His replacement, David Albahari, one of Serbia's best-known short-story writers, subsequently left for a teaching sabbatical in Canada.

Feeling cut off from the world, the Belgrade community and SAVEZ warmly welcomed the recent visit by JDC and the British Fund.

Both organizations have been supporting all the Jewish communities in the former Yugoslavia during the war.

Their visit to Belgrade was intended to show their support for the ongoing communal efforts, according to representatives of the organizations.

JDC's relations with Yugoslavia date back to 1933, when it began financially assisting German Jews who arrived here fleeing persecution at home.

Most of Yugoslavia's Jews were deported or killed during the Holocaust.

Only 6,500 Jews were registered in Yugoslavia after the war — down from a total of some 78,000 prior to 1941. The largest concentration of Jews — with communities of 1,500 each — were in Zagreb, now the capital of



Croatia; Sarajevo, the current capital of Bosnia; and Belgrade, the capital of Serbia.

Though few in numbers, the Yugoslav Jewish community became one of the most vital small Jewish communities in Europe, with its operations coordinated by SAVEZ's Belgrade office.

With JDC support, the Yugoslav Jewish community established a summer camp, an old age home and myriad youth and social welfare programs, which became the glue that held the community together in the postwar years.

During its daylong visit to Belgrade in late January, the JDC-British Fund delegation visited most of the programs they support. The JDC was represented by its financial chairman, Jonathan Kolker, and by Norman Tilles, chairman of the JDC International Committee.

The delegation was hosted by Asa Singer, current president of SAVEZ, and by Popovic.

Popovic, a longtime community member, is typical of the people in their 40s to 50s who have taken over the reins of the community and have been working vigorously to keep local programs operating.

#### Requests for food declining

"When sanctions first hit Serbia and Montenegro in 1991 and inflation soared, our efforts were channeled toward cash supplements and later on getting food shipments into Belgrade," Kolker said as he toured a fully stocked food warehouse located in the basement of a local synagogue.

"But since last year, currency reforms have cut back on inflation, and with a more stable currency, we've gone from a high of 500 requests for food packages to less than 300," he said, referring to the number of needy recipients.

According to Tilles, JDC had arranged food and medical shipments even before the war began, as a precautionary measure.

He said JDC not only sent in goods and cash, but a social worker to help implement the programs.

Singer and Popovic took the delegation through the community's pharmacy, which was established when drugs became difficult to obtain in local shops.

As part of their efforts, JDC and the British Fund had trucked in requested medicines, along with books on pharmacology.

Nearly half the community's 1,800 members are older than 50, and many depend on medicines.

The pharmacy, whose shipments are brought in as humanitarian aid under U.N. supervision, also supplies medicines to three small Jewish communities in Banja Luka, Doboj and Grbavica, located over the border in Serbian-held Bosnia.

The pharmacy fills some 1,500 prescriptions each month, officials here said.

Singer said the community also shares a portion of its medicines with the local population in Belgrade. He said they also see to it that the city's Gypsy population receives food parcels as well.

Singer said the local Jewish and Gypsy communities had shared warm relations ever since the occupying Nazis killed Jews in a Gypsy neighborhood in Belgrade in 1941. Until today, the Gypsy community commemorates the date with a memorial service held in conjunction with Belgrade's Jews.

As he hosted the tour, Popovic emphasized the need for children's welfare programs.

"This is where we must invest," he said. "Of course, we must care for our elderly, but 20 percent of this community is comprised of children. That means we need to have a summer camp and more activities for our youngsters."

The former Yugoslav summer camp is located in Croatia, no longer reachable by members of the Belgrade community. As a result, JDC has supplied scholarships for Serbian Jewish youths to attend Jewish summer camps in Bulgaria and Hungary.

During its visit, the delegation toured a new children's center located inside a synagogue building, where a warren of rooms are now devoted to drawing classes, arts and crafts and a lounge.

Six separate clubs now serve up to 150 children each week.

At another stop, the delegation met with six psychologists who work at a non-sectarian psychological institute.

JDC had provided the psychologists with fellowships that took them to Israel, where they took courses in learning how to deal with stress, war and the hardships of refugees.

During the evening, about 100 local Jews attended a special program for the visitors.

Jovan Shatric, a 16-year-old who spoke both English and Hebrew fluently, described how he and his friends were busy rebuilding their teen club.

Nearby sat psychologist Tamara Steiner-Popovic, who is involved in nearly all the local children's programs.

"During the worst part of the sanctions and the inflation, we learned how to do everything with literally nothing," she said, noting that even the simplest things, such as crayons and paper "were out of reach — especially when inflation reduced a person's monthly salary to \$1.50."

Then she smiled. "Those days, it appears, are now behind us, and we can begin building our programs again," she said.

The international community eased its sanctions against Serbia a few months ago, when Serb officials promised to stop aiding the Bosnian Serbs. Among other things, the easing of the sanctions opened up lines of communication and supplies.

Despite the difficulties created by the war, the sanctions and Serbia's negative image in the international media, the majority of Belgrade's Jews say they plan to remain.

Dejan Petrovic, a 27-year-old veterinary student who works with the community's social programs, summed up an attitude prevalent among many here:

"My family has been in Serbia for 700 years," he said. "They have stuck through everything. I simply won't be the first to leave."

"Besides, my fiancée and I are planning a Jewish wedding this spring," he said, adding that a good friend of his is completing his rabbinic training in Israel and plans to return soon.

Yugoslavia's only rabbi, Cadik Danon, is retired.

Petrovic said of his friend: "He's coming back soon, and we're waiting for him. We hope our wedding will be his very first duty." □



The "Martin Balus" Home for the Elderly

RELIEF FOR JEWISH ELDERLY

About a decade ago, amidst the intricate web of narrow streets and lanes which comprise the Tei neighborhood, the Martin Balus Home for the Elderly has managed somehow to find enough space for its buildings.

Under the patronage of the Federation of Jewish Communities, the Home on Ripiceni Street houses about 58 elderly people, and ensures them, within reasonable limits, decent living conditions.

"The management of the Home has always done everything possible to ease and alleviate the suffering of elderly who were left without support," explained Dr. Charles Crupariu, Director.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
JUST LIKE HOME!  
ARCHIVES

The institution includes four buildings and a stately synagogue.

The rooms are large and comfortable, and are equipped with radio or television sets.

Using donations made by the patients themselves as well as assistance from the American organization - the Joint - the administration of the Martin Balus Home has succeeded in giving the whole institution a pleasant atmosphere which delights the visitor.

Here, the elderly residents enjoy the use of various facilities such as gyms, video rooms and spacious living rooms.

They also benefit from health services such as physiotherapy, ergotherapy and dentistry.

By special appointment one can receive the services of a hairdresser or pedicurist - the expense being entirely covered by the Home.



- "I feel pretty well here - and the staff take good care of us. Since my family has abandoned me I feel at home here!" Mr. Diamant, Solomon (79 years old) told us.

#### "NO FOOD ECONOMY!"

Another positive aspect of the Home is its food services.

In accordance with the requirements of Jewish dietary tradition, the kitchen has two separate rooms - one for milk products and another one for meat products.

- "The elderly are provided with meals to their full satisfaction. Even if some of them are on a diet, the kitchen staff pay due attention to their specific problem. There is no food economy! Our patients must feel not only well - they must feel very well!" stressed Mr. Jean Shtirbu, Administrative Manager.

#### THE SYNAGOGUE - UNDER THE SAME ROOF!

Another cause for satisfaction with the Home is surely the synagogue.

The traditional Saturday prayers are held in the handsome hall dedicated to religious ritual. On weekdays, varied cultural activities take place there.

- "I was a soldier in the First World War," said the oldest resident of the home, the 101 year-old Mr. Solomon Mendelovici. "I have seen quite a lot during my long life, but now, all I need is rest. I have found it here and it's wonderful! I can't expect anything more from this life because I am too old. Here is my little universe. Here I have a home, I have food and what's more - the synagogue is near by, under the same roof!

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FIELD TRIP TO ALBANIA  
January 15-19, 1995

Prepared by Manlio Dell'Ariccia  
Excerpts

Introduction

The main purpose of this trip was to make an assessment of the Jewish families that still live in Albania. Namely, I checked:

- their general living conditions;
- their level of Jewish identity;
- the reasons why they decided in 1991 to stay in Albania instead of going to Israel like most of the Jewish community;
- the need for a JDC assistance program.

All the people included in our list have at least one parent who is/was Jewish, but all of them are/were not married to a Jewish partner. They considered in 1991 the possibility of making aliyah, but in the end decided to stay in Albania for various family reasons.

During my stay in Albania I visited almost all the Jewish families. Two-thirds of them live in the capital, Tirana; the others are scattered all over the country. Some of these families live in wealthy conditions by Albanian standards; other ones are in poor conditions and in need of financial assistance.

JDC could give most relevant assistance to this small Jewish community by providing material about Judaism and about Israeli society. This would help this community to maintain its Jewish identity and could indirectly encourage, particularly the younger generation, to make aliyah in the future.

General Country Situation

An appropriate short definition of Albania could be "the country of bunkers." In fact, the only things which the previous dictatorial regime left in tact were thousands of small fortifications that are still visible all around the country. They were built, according to the Communist leaders, to defend Albania from the always impending attack by Western countries. "These people were in bad faith; they, as well as the whole population, well knew that this attack would have never taken place; they made it to submit us." This is the explanation that the Albanians generally give



when you ask them about these bunkers. Their existence is very helpful for a first time visitor of the country to have a better sense of the past and the present reality of Albania, to realize how this country was isolated from the rest of the world for such a long time, and to understand the reasons of the poverty of the country.

The common opinion is that the general conditions improved during the last 2-3 years; however, a person visiting the country for the first time is still struck by the poverty and underdevelopment of Albania upon arrival to the Tirana airport. There are no fences and animals graze near the landing-strip (Ethiopian reminders for me, but we are here only at a short flight distance from Italy, Greece, Austria, the "civilized" Europe and not in the heart of Africa). The shock for the visitor comes not only from the misery that can be observed in the people and in the things, but also from their depression and their neglect. It comes through the sight of malnourishment, of indigent clothes, of degraded buildings, of shops with few goods that only a minority of Albanians can buy. It comes from the garbage that even in Tirana is not collected but burned in the streets; it comes from the complete lack of light in the streets when it is dark; it comes from the open sewers standing amidst the pavement without any protection. In Tirana it can happen, like it occurred to me one evening, to see the person with whom you are walking and talking suddenly disappear because she has fallen in one of these open holes; it was mere chance that this person went through this accident uninjured; the sight of it, reminded me of a typical "gag" of the silent movies of the past.

Unemployed people loaf around the streets. According to official data, unemployed persons comprise 12% of the population; the feeling is that only 12% of the population is employed. A primitive and not intensive agriculture is today the only financial resource of the country. Industry practically does not exist. Most of the factories, which worked during the previous regime, are now closed because they were old, obsolete and not competitive anymore in a free market economy.

The average monthly salary for government employees amounts to \$50/60. A minister or a university professor can earn almost twice as much. An individual can survive with the equivalent of \$60 (if he does not pay rent), but a family surely not.

In spite of the above described situation, there are some elements that make it possible to see the future more optimistically. First, in speaking to Albanian people you notice a remarkable sense of dignity and a strong will of rising again. Second, the democratic party, which now governs the country, has actually established within a short period of time a real democratic system and is acting in a way to achieve slow but solid progress, improving the general living conditions in the country. The main problem is that, as always happens in the countries which move from a communist to a free market economy, only a small part of the population is actually benefitting from these improvements.

## The Jewish Community

Jewish presence in Albania goes back to the 14th century, with an increase in the 15th and 16th centuries. Many Jews emigrated to Albania from Greece at the end of the last century, while more arrived in the early years of this century both from Greece and other European countries.

In spite of the fact that Jewish people were well-integrated in Albanian society, most of them preferred to leave the country after a few years, so that just before the second world war, there were only 200 Jews in Albania.

Anti-Semitism has never generally been present in Albania, and in fact, hundreds of Jews fled to this country to escape Nazi persecution. Both during the fascist occupation first and in particular during the German one later, Albanian people hid and saved many Jews. The number of Jewish people who were deported to the Nazi camps from Albania was actually minimal.

After the end of the conflict, most of the Jews who came during the war went back to their original countries. Also during the communist regime, there was no discrimination against the Jewish community. However, Jewish people suffered from lack of freedom like all other Albanians. Any religious activity and/or educational one was completely and strictly forbidden.

Today we are aware that there are still 20 Jewish families in Albania, for a total of 61 people, of which: 35 are 100% Jewish according to Halacha criteria; 18 are spouses of Jewish people; 6 are children of a Jewish father and 2 are children of a mother with a Jewish father who considers herself Jewish. 13 of these families live in Tirana; the others are scattered all over the country (see attached map).

## JDC Role in Albania

There is no question that this small Jewish Albanian community needs some assistance, especially if we consider the general poverty of the country. JDC assistance can be most meaningful if it will be individualized according to the different needs of every family in this small community.

By setting up any assistance program, JDC targets should be the following:

- a) to guarantee to every Jewish person a minimal but decent standard in his/her daily life;
- b) to provide medical assistance for those people who cannot get adequate treatments/medication either because they are not available in Albania or for shortage of financial resources;



- c) to keep alive and reinforce, especially among the young generations, a Jewish identity;
- d) to facilitate people to consider aliyah as a possible suitable alternative.

Staff, after its initial visit, is recommending the following:

- 1) providing financial assistance on a quarterly basis to those people who are retired and receive an insufficient pension;
- 2) distributing, twice a year, gift packages with food and clothes to the children of the poorest families;
- 3) continuing to send every year matzoth to all the families;
- 4) mailing magazines, books, cassettes and other material on Judaism and Israel;
- 5) giving the opportunity to young people to attend summer camps, international meetings, etc. that take place in other Eastern European countries;
- 6) encouraging young students to complete their studies in Israel;
- 7) helping those, who wish to visit Israel, to fulfill their wishes.



A TRIP TO BELGRADE, 24-27 JANUARY 1995  
EXCERPTS  
Yechiel Bar-Chaim, Country Director

1. OUR VISIT

The JDC/CBF group of eight persons was warmly and honorably received by the Federation and the Belgrade Community.

At the Board Meeting, Jacques Beracha, the Treasurer of the Belgrade Community, asked that more be done for the communities in Serbian-controlled Bosnia. Mr. Jonathan Kolker suggested that the JDC cash relief program should be extended to the entire Jewish population there, including able-bodied persons. I reviewed ways to send in more food -- a truckload should go in soon -- and requested full social and income data on the 200 or so persons living there.

The Chief of Mission at the US Embassy and his top aides graciously spent more than an hour with us until we had to break away to meet the enthusiastic graduates of the JDC/UKAID/UNICEF "Helping the Helpers" Seminar in Israel.

2. SOCIAL RELIEF

The Social Commission of the Federation of Jewish Communities, composed largely of those working in our emergency relief program, seems now to be functioning properly. The appointment of an administrator/coordinator for the Social Team means that we are finally beginning to receive the necessary documentation.

3. FOOD PACKAGES

During the visit the latest JDC/SACTA/CBF truckload of 1380 food packages plus the anti-lice materials arrived. An overall distribution pattern was set out, guaranteeing a majority for the Belgrade, Semun, and Pancevo communities (as required by SACTA) but also including new communities as well as Grbavica, Doboj, and Banja Luka, was approved. 100 non-sectarian packages will be split between a Gypsy Community allied with the Federation since the Holocaust and the Pancevo Old Age Home where ten of our refugees are being cared for.

4. THE PHARMACY

The pharmacy serves 300-500 persons each month. As you can see from the attached report, more than 16,000 prescriptions were filled this past year.

We have recently been able to lower supply costs considerably for many medicines by purchasing from local suppliers. A JDC/SACTA/CBF un-authorized shipment of additional medications from abroad is at this moment en route for Belgrade. Independently, CBF has also sent in 17 large boxes of donated medicaments which have yet to be inventoried.

5. RENT SUBSIDIES FOR REFUGEES

73 families now receive an average rent subsidy of DM 100 per month. The list changes constantly. Another 26 families who were once on the list have since emigrated while others have come.

6. THE "MEZUZAH CLUB"

Following my earlier encouragement, 14 refugees in Belgrade have joined the self-help initiative and have already made 280 "kipot." To economize on thread in a spare market, they apparently took apart old sweaters to make this first batch. The Rabbinical Cabinet has agreed to purchase the whole lot for resale at home. We may end up purchasing for them abroad quality thread and appliques out of the material costs.

7. YOUTH CLUBS

The JDC-sponsored refurbishing of the club facilities is proceeding apace. The Community has organized six children and youth clubs which assemble up to 150 of the 400 Jewish youngsters in Belgrade. Enthusiastic madrichim and campers just back from the Habonim Dror winter camp in Hungary (we helped them participate) were very noticeable at the public meeting with our delegation.



PHARMACY REPORT FROM 01.01.1994 - 31.12.1994

MONTH 1994	NUMBER OF SERVICED COMMUNITIES	NUMBER OF SERVICED PEOPLE	NUMBER OF PRESCRIPTIONS	NUMBER OF INPUT items of medicines
JANUARY	12	323	917	27
FEBRUARY	13	420	1333	18
MARCH	15	533	1825	258
APRIL	14	362	1168	19
MAY	13	378	1553	25
JUNE	15	489	1699	50
JULY	16	373	1220	166
AUGUST	12	319	1108	100
SEPTEMBER	15	472	1798	89
OCTOBER	12	443	1455	240
NOVEMBER	15	353	1071	222
DECEMBER	16	326	1055	116



Excerpts from Field Trip Report on Bulgaria  
November 30, 1994

Prepared by Moshe Jahoda, Country Director

General

For former eastern-bloc countries, the transition from political dictatorship to democracy is more than complex. The limited privatization process has introduced some fancy western commodities, new shops, restaurants, etc. At the same time, the majority of people cannot afford to enjoy these innovations. The open fighting among political parties and factions in Parliament has become a somehow boring show for the public. Right-wing politicians and left-wing ones remain from the communist era and their tactics are similar. One of the "achievements" the people witness is the fragile control of the government in all spheres. On the streets security is shaky, and many enterprises are now controlled by mafia groups. The rate of inflation in 1994 has reached 120%. Prices for consumer goods increased during the first 10 months of 1994 by 103%, while in 1993 by only 50.8%.

Due to a continuing political stalemate in Parliament, the Bulgarian president has called for new elections on December 18, 1994. My personal forecast is the rise of a more powerful socialist (ex-communist) faction in Parliament. One of the reasons is that 2.5 million pensioners live in a dreadful economic situation. They have nothing to lose, so the majority of them will pin their hopes on this party. The theoretical size of the electorate is approximately 6.5 million.

Other Important Political Circumstances

In a country of 8.6 million citizens, one million are Moslems, 800,000 of whom are of Turkish origin. One of the tragic results of the Bosnian war is a growing polarization among the Muslim population in neighboring countries. As the greatest support for Bosnian Moslems comes from the fundamentalist countries that simultaneously are committed to the "holy war" against Israel and the Jews in the world, this development bears an ominous change in attitudes towards Jews and Israel. There have been ramifications of the regional conflict on Moslems in Bulgaria, and SHALOM is monitoring the situation.

The Jewish Community

Elections are scheduled for March 1995. It is expected that new leadership will fill positions in all branches of SHALOM.

### Renovation of Beit-Haam

A Central British Fund (CBF) delegation visited Bulgaria and CBF in principle agreed to raise money for the reconstruction and renovation of Beit-Haam. In order to enable CBF to take the appropriate steps, JDC will try to identify an industrial engineer or technician to help SHALOM define the functional requirements of the building. Based on these recommendations, a Bulgarian architect and a construction engineer will prepare a skeleton plan and cost estimate. CBF will cover the planning costs.

### Jewish Education - Activity of JDC's Volunteers in Bulgaria

The volunteers are now preparing educational materials for the *madrichim* of the winter camp. The materials include biographical facts about and opinions of 15 prominent Jewish personalities. This material will be used in a pre-*hadracha* seminar to take place from December 16-18. The camp will take place from January 2-8, 1995 for 100 participants.

They are integrated in teaching programs of the five *Talmud Torah* (Sunday School) classes. The subjects for those in kindergarten through grade 8 are Prophets and Sephardic Jewish history. For those in high school, the subjects include history and ethical attitudes in Judaism. They also teach in the kindergarten in Sofia, particularly in preparation for Jewish festivals. They are currently preparing for Chanukah celebrations.

They visit the provincial communities of Plovdiv, Russe, and Varna every three weeks. In Plovdiv, they assist in the activity of the "Dor Le Dor" club.

Amy and Dawne are in good spirits, learning Bulgarian and making nice progress. They have been well-received by the community.

### Winter Camp 1995

In the framework of SHALOM'S ability to assume greater responsibility for programs, the forthcoming winter camp for children will be run by SHALOM. JDC will provide financial assistance, guidance in terms of *hadracha*, and other professional support.

### Religious Affairs

Rabbi Kahalon is concentrating on reviving the services in the synagogue, and attracting the younger generation to participate. Also, every week he organizes a public *Kabalat Shabbat* in Beit-Haam. He is trying to import kosher meat from Romania. He is striving to motivate a Jewish spiritual awakening in Sofia and the provinces despite all kinds of financial difficulties, including the lack of funds in the community that he encounters. JDC has agreed with SHALOM to support his traveling costs to the provinces. Generally speaking, he has made a rather good start.



### Health and Cultural Activity of Elderly

Thanks to JDC's initiative, pensioner counselors have been trained, and now three health clubs for the elderly are successfully operating, one each in Sofia, Russe, and Plovdiv. The participants are very happy and enjoy meeting to exercise and engage in cultural activities.

Plovdiv now has a very active "Dor Le Dor" club guided by a Buncher Leadership Program alumnus and supported by the JSC volunteers. This club has 25 permanent members and focuses on Jewish history, tradition and religion.





**FIELD TRIP REPORT ON THE CZECH REPUBLIC**  
**November 15, 1994**  
**(Excerpts)**

Prepared by Yechiel Bar-Chaim, Country Director

**BRNO**

There is an active choir, library, elderly club, and program of retreat cum recreation outings, organized by Tania Peliskova, a Buncher graduate, and financed by JDC. Plans to expand community kitchen facility to be co-financed.

Shmuel Abramson has been identified by Rabbi Karel Sidon as a potential rabbi for Brno. Abramson, who is now learning for the rabbinate in Jerusalem with extra-budgetary support, should come to visit and teach in Moravia to meet the community and see if the projected match is a sound one.

Two personal service cases were visited. Mr. Slunsky is mostly bedridden but cheerfully helped by his wife and by a national service recruit attached to the Community and supervised by Peliskova. The Vershovskis are a family from formerly Soviet Georgia living now in Brno. They have been referred to HIAS in Vienna concerning U.S. or Canadian emigration.

**PRAGUE**

**Property**

With the exception of the return of the State Jewish Museum, gridlock marks the latest round of property restitution. The Federation is planning a press conference for December 8th to attempt to breach the stalemate.

One-time compensation to Holocaust survivors from the Czech Government is close to implementation. A grant of \$75 for each month of imprisonment (beyond a three month minimum) is the current proposal. While some survivors want to hold out for German reparations, it seems that because the politically powerful Sudeten Germans have counterclaims and any settlement with the Czechs would have far-reaching implications, such reparations are unlikely.

**Health and Welfare**

The Charles Jordan Home is full and working well. Major difficulty concerns the lack

of a satisfactory facility for the very elderly residents who require more medical care, and the community continues to negotiate with several hospitals to arrange for a Jewish long-term care ward.

### Education and Culture

#### **Schools and Other Facilities**

- \* The Jewish Kindergarten has 10 happy children.
- \* I met with the new and cooperative JAFI shaliach, Menachem (Pavel) Friedman and his wife. The Ulpan is thriving with more than 160 students.
- \* ORT is dealing directly with negotiations for a computer laboratory.
- \* Rabbi Sidon is pressing to establish a Jewish secondary school, perhaps in the Jachymova St. offices that the Jewish Museum is scheduled to vacate (eventually). This site could be used as school, community center, expanded Ulpan, and ORT computer laboratory or some combination of the same.
- \* A Czech Federation delegation will participate in the European Council Assembly in Budapest this week in a workshop on planning a community center led by Alberto Senderey and Israel Sela.

#### **Youth Programs**

Former Arev and JDC youth worker Danny Ziss is back in Prague studying architecture on a second-year abroad arrangement with the Technion. He wants to work with the youth on our behalf again, but is a full-time student and also teaches Hebrew 3 hours a week for JAFI. The youth group itself, under new leadership, has submitted its 1995 budget.

#### **Adult Education**

I gave an informal lecture on "Masaryk and the Jews" to a small group from Beit Simcha. Beit Simcha comprises mostly young people alienated from the official community by its insistence on Halachic notions of "Who is a Jew." The group is pluralistic in its aim and guests. Beit Simcha organizes social and intellectual activity for a broadly defined segment of the community.

An educational seminar led by Rabbi Gluck for adults from throughout the Republic is scheduled for January, possibly with modest JDC support.

**Leadership Training**

We are concentrating on integrating the newly restituted Jewish Museum into the cultural and educational life of the community. Director Leon Pavlat is working closely with us on training plans.

A leadership workshop for the Prague Community, to be led by Alberto Senderey, is scheduled for late February.

**Religious Needs**

Kosher wine is now being produced again in the Czech Republic. Our subsidy will help pay for 3,000 liters for community use and resale to members.

**Finances**

The Prague Community has agreed to finance in full the monthly publication Rosh Hodesh, with an annual cost close to \$25,000.





FIELD TRIP REPORT TO POLAND  
JANUARY 23 - FEBRUARY 1, 1995

BY ZVI FEINE  
EXCERPTS

A. Objectives of Trip

The primary objectives were to participate on behalf of the JDC at ceremonies commemorating the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz/Birkenau, as well as to monitor the implementation of JDC-supported programs and supervise JDC staff operating in Poland.

B. Political and Economic Developments

The internal political conflict between coalition government partners has deteriorated over the past two to three months, leading to ineffective government functioning. Much needed legislation is not going into effect due to the political friction. This is attributable to the presidential elections scheduled to take place in October, 1995. The chances of President Lech Walesa being re-elected appear slim for now.

The political situation is affecting the Polish economy. Privatization is progressing at a snail's pace, and industrial output appears to be at a standstill. Unemployment has increased slightly to 11%. Inflation, in reality, appears to be twice as high as governmental projections of 17%.

C. 50th Anniversary Ceremonies for Auschwitz/Birkenau Liberation

The ceremonies, and the disorganized manner in which they were organized and executed, received media attention throughout the world and of course, in Poland. It was the impression of the AJDC-Poland staff that the President's Office intended to give the ceremonies a Catholic slant and to limit severely the Jewish aspects due to the upcoming presidential elections. However, the government went too far, and was castigated for this by world as well as by Polish media. Ultimately, many heads of state attended the ceremonies held in Auschwitz and in Krakow, and dignity was lent to the occasion.

In order to mitigate some of the above noted circumstances, Jewish organizations in Poland and in Europe organized a separate Jewish ceremony on January 26 at Auschwitz preceding the Polish government's ceremony on January 27. Elie Wiesel, among others, addressed the crowd. Zvi Feine represented JDC and read a message from the AJDC President Ambassador Milton Wolf (see attached), an address that was televised and heard

by over 1,000 Jews attending the ceremony. This was the only message from any North American Jewish Organization.

D. Jewish Religious Community of Poland (JRCP)

There has been no improvement in the JRCP's financial situation. Their income from the sale of kosher vodka has dropped even further. We strongly urged the JRCP to take action in securing financial contributions from Jewish communities outside Warsaw which have retrieved Jewish communal property, per JDC policy.

The JRCP did receive a shipment of kosher food from Norway. It consisted of tins of sausage, goulash, beef, gefilte fish, and assorted other items. We estimate the value of the shipment at just under \$20,000. While the quantity was smaller than in previous years, the donation provides the JRCP with three to four months supply of the needed food items.

The 1994-95 almanac has largely sold out. The JDC plaque has been fixed and placed at the main entrance to the JRCP building. Plaques on all JDC-supported restaurants are being affixed.

E. TSKZ

TSKZ's financial situation also continues to be disastrous. Despite extensive legal maneuvering, they have not completed their affairs with the previous tenant of the TSKZ building, nor with the prospective new tenant (Deutsche Bank). So, they have almost no income. It is not clear when the issue will be resolved.

TSKZ national elections are expected in June, 1995. Many of the current leaders will probably be replaced with the exception of Mr. Szurmiej.

**Srodborow Renovations - Stage III**

Plans to renovate the kitchen were drawn up with the help of an architect who is an expert on industrial kitchens. TSKZ has committed to keeping the kitchen kosher, with the cooperation of Rabbi Schudrich of the Lauder Foundation. Funding will come from CBF, a grant from Meyerhoff, and a small JDC contribution.

**The Womens Section**

The group is functioning on a weekly basis but on a smaller scale than we were informed. Approximately 200 women are registered but in practice, there are only 40 activists. A normal meeting attracts approximately 10 women. Still, the potential here is great and we encourage such work.



members as well as support groups will be developed upon her return. Prof. Guttenbaum invited Yossi Erez to address the CHO's conference in February, and Erez will also be involved in planning the CHO's annual seminar in September, 1995.

I. Polish Union of Jewish Students (PUSZ)

The PUSZ held its annual convention in early January at Srodoborow, attended by 45 Jewish students. Yossi Erez and Helena Datner played a major role in guiding the content of this convention and contributed significantly to its success. A new president, Piotr Sobtka Vinitzky, was elected. He selected as his secretary Piotr Kadlic, former PUSZ President and Buncher graduate. We committed \$1,000 to them as an initial gift from JDC and clarified there would not be an ongoing subsidy for their activities; JDC will consider support of specific activities in the future.

J. Welfare

Verification of the welfare recipients list has been completed. The National Commission held 35 meetings with local welfare commissions to review the entire caseload. JDC expressed its appreciation and support for all they did. Members of the commission noted that they are under attack from many assistees who were removed from the welfare caseload following the verification. It was especially gratifying to note that some of the assistees were removed from the list since the social service staff helped them achieve status of war invalids. These individuals now receive quite high pensions, increasing their standard of living.

A small home care program serving four persons is operating with our help in Krakow. In Warsaw, Dorota Flinker is matching elderly needing home care and poor, able-bodied Jews willing to provide home care services. Consideration will be given to expanding these efforts.



MESSAGE FROM JDC PRESIDENT AMB. MILTON A. WOLF  
TO BE READ AT THE CEREMONY COMMEMORATING  
THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ

AS WE STAND HERE AT THE SITE OF ONE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE'S GREATEST TRAGEDIES, THERE IS LITTLE TO ASSUAGE THE ANGUISH THAT WILL LINGER IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER.

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER WORLD WAR II, THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE LABORED TO BRING SOME MEASURE OF RELIEF AND COMFORT TO THE JEWS CAUGHT IN THE GRIP OF NAZI TERROR. WE DID WHAT WE COULD WITH WHAT WE HAD, BUT--OBVIOUSLY--IT WAS NOT ENOUGH.

UNTIL DECEMBER 1941, JDC MANAGED TO SEND FOOD AND MEDICAL HELP TO 600,000 JEWS IN POLAND. AFTERWARDS, JDC CONTINUED TO AID JEWS IN OCCUPIED POLAND THROUGH THIRD PARTIES. THROUGHOUT THIS CENTURY, JDC NEVER ABANDONED THE JEWS OF POLAND.

TO THIS DAY WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT THE AGING GENERATION OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS SHALL LIVE OUT THEIR DAYS IN DIGNITY HERE IN POLAND AND THROUGHOUT EASTERN EUROPE. WE ARE ALSO HELPING A YOUNGER GENERATION TO EXPLORE THEIR JEWISH IDENTITIES AND REESTABLISH THEIR TIES WITH THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

JDC TODAY, WORKING IN 60 COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD, IS DEDICATED TO NURTURING THE TREE OF JEWISH LIFE AND THE TREE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE. THAT, SURELY, IS OUR ULTIMATE TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORIES OF THE JEWS WHO PERISHED HERE.

## **JDC-HUNGARY PROGRAM UPDATES**

January-February 1995  
(Excerpts)

- Submitted by Dr. Israel Sela, Country Director

### **I. Relief and Welfare**

#### **A. Cash Assistance**

As of February 1995, the total number of people receiving some kind of cash assistance through the program implemented by the Hungarian Jewish Social Support Foundation is 2,421. Most of these elderly are chronically ill or have some kind of physical disability. The amount of support is determined by the difference between their monthly income and the bareme, which is currently 17,000 HUF for singles and 25,500 HUF for couples. New eligibility criteria were established in order to serve those with the greatest need. Based on the new criteria, 149 people are no longer eligible.

#### **B. Food Program**

A total of 41,595 kosher hot lunches were delivered in the first two months of 1995. 505 people were served in the kosher kitchens, and 200 people received hot meals at home. 466 dry food packages were distributed, mainly by volunteers who donate their time, the use of their cars, and transportation costs. JDC and the Foundation are currently working to find a way to meet the growing demand for the meals-on-wheels program due to increased food costs and the deteriorating health of elderly survivors.

### **II. Other Programs for the Elderly**

#### **A. Old Age Homes**

A Claims Conference donation of 575,000 DM to be matched by the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities has enabled the addition of 25 nursing beds to the Ujpest Old Age Home. Construction has started and is expected to be finished by May 1995.

#### **B. Pensioner Clubs**

In cooperation with the Hungarian Jewish Community and with the support of the Doron Foundation, a new day care center opened in Nagyfuvaros Street, serving 30-50 Jewish elderly in need of social contact and a hot meal.

### **III. Major Events with JDC Involvement**

#### **A. Home care and Hospice Provision**

The Foundation received a grant of 4.3 million HUF (approximately 41,000 USD) from the National Health Insurance Committee for the development, realization and support of a home care and hospice service. 40-50 elderly presently supported through the Foundation will be the beneficiaries. The project began with an international conference entitled "Innovations in the Provision of Social Programs," realized with the cooperation of JDC, the British Council, the Municipality of Budapest and the Ministry of Welfare. 350 people attended the three-day conference which opened at the City Hall, and 150 people were present on each of the subsequent days which took place at the Balint Jewish Community Center. The conference opened a new dialogue between JDC, the Ministry of Welfare, and the Municipality about cooperation in caring for Jewish elderly in need.



#### **B. Home Care Training Program**

At the invitation of the Ministry of Welfare and the Soros Foundation, JDC has begun organizing a third home care training program in Nagykanizsa. The location was chosen in order to bring knowledge of home care to the provinces. The program's goal is to train Hungarian physicians, nurses, and physiotherapists about interdisciplinary team work, and home care therapy and practice. There will also be panel discussions on topics such as ethics in home care.

#### **C. "Hand-in-Hand" Program**

This program, designed to integrate mentally retarded adults into the general community, was organized in the Balint Jewish Community Center with the patronage of Mrs. Goncz, the First Lady of Hungary.

#### **D. Hilda Barinkai**

On the occasion of her 96th birthday, Mrs. Hilda Barinkai was presented with an 80th anniversary JDC medal. Mrs. Barinkai, after losing her entire family during the Holocaust, began to work for the Joint, and does so to this day. JDC and Foundation staff, as well as prominent members of the Community, joined her in marking this special occasion. It was a heart-warming event.

#### **E. Liberation of the Budapest Ghetto**

JDC laid a wreath at the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Budapest ghetto. Leaders of the Jewish community, dignitaries from the municipality, ambassadors, and representatives of the Jewish Agency were present.

### **IV. Cooperation with Other JDC Offices**

#### **A. Romanian Visit**

Professor Nicolae Cajal, President of FEDROM, Alex Sivan, Director-General of FEDROM, and Romania Country Director Zvi Feine visited the Lauder/AJJDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas in preparation for the participation of a Romanian delegation during the upcoming camp season. This summer will mark the first time that Romanian children attended the camp.

#### **B. Help-the Helpers Conference**

A group of twenty persons from all over the former Yugoslavia stopped in Budapest en route to the JDC/UKJAI/UNICEF Help the Helpers Seminar in Jerusalem. The JDC-Hungary office provided assistance to the group, and arranged for their airport transportation. At the request of JDC-Paris, Hungary will be the location for the next Help-the Helpers conference.

#### **C. Polish Visit**

Yossi Erez, JDC Consultant on Community, Jewish Education and Culture, and Helena Datner, Director of the Jewish Resource Center in Poland, visited JDC-Hungary to view the operation of the Balint Jewish Community Center as well as the Resource Center.

### **V. Lauder/JDC International Camp at Szarvas**

Preparations have begun for the 1995 summer season. Repairs were made on the wooden houses, and the lights in the dining hall were replaced with energy-saving bulbs. The swimming pool's sewage

system was repaired, and a daily water tank was installed. Preparations were also made to change the ventilation system in the kitchen, and the sidewalks in the reception area were enlarged.

Country directors have received information about the 1995 summer session. This will be the first year that Bulgaria and the FSU will not participate. However, as noted above, the first Romanian delegation will attend the camp.

#### **VI. General Issues Concerning the Jewish Community**

Hungary's Constitutional Court has ruled that part of the 1992 law compensating individuals persecuted during World War II is unconstitutional following allegations that it discriminated against Jews. The Parliament was ordered to draw up new legislation by 1995 to compensate all those who were deported, put into forced labor or condemned without proceedings. Until now, only those who fought in army combat units, from which Jews were barred, have been compensated.





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March 1, 1995

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler  
President  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10021-7064

Dear Alex,

Thank you for keeping in touch. I, too, hope that we can connect soon.

Michael Harris's departure is good news; his replacement, Mr. Rubenstein, seems to have a good professional background and is hopefully an energetic sort of a fellow. I should tell you that while in Israel last December, I finally met Ansel Harris - he could not have been more gracious and deferent. We have now a very cordial relationship, even, dare I say it, it is almost friendly. Live and learn....

We, JDC, have set up a European NGO named EZRA. It is based in our Rome office and Manlio dell'Ariceia is its director. He, Alberto Senderay and I are the founding Board Members; I was designated President. We are now looking for board members from each European country and hope that by May we will be functioning. We will invite UKJAID to join us when we have had a chance to solidify our working relationship with the other board members. Until then we're being discrete about this activity.

I trust that you have been receiving all IDP materials, including my report on the Chinese delegation's visit to Israel. Please confirm.

Warm regards to you and Rhea.

Sincerely,

  
Henryka Manes

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February 27, 1995

Rabbi Alexander Schindler  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10021

Dear Alex:

It is my pleasure to welcome you as a new member of the Eastern Europe Area Committee. The countries in our purview include Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and the former Yugoslavia. Our committee is charged with setting policy for and reviewing JDC activities in the region. It is an exciting area, and I am sure that you will find working with the committee a meaningful challenge.

You will find enclosed both our mission statement and materials detailing the programs in each of our countries. I trust that you will find this information helpful and informative.

My co-chairs Alex Grass and Harvey Schulweis join me in welcoming you aboard. We look forward to working together.

Sincerely,

Gene Ribakoff, Chairman  
Eastern Europe Area Committee

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*gpc*  
Spoke to Henryka...

No meeting of East Europe Area committee at March sessions

IDP meets Sunday, March 12 from 10:30a.m. to Noon -  
Henryka says she'll fight for you if they take you off the  
IDP

*her*  
Told you may not be back from West Coast on March 12...

*Thank you -  
I can't be  
there for IDP meeting*

*Thanks*

*I Told her*

## JDC IN EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE

*During the past fifty years Jewish Europe was stricken by geopolitical events, with devastating results to communal life. While Western Europe began to revive from the trauma of the Holocaust, Eastern Europe was plunged into the Communist era. JDC helped both Western and Eastern Europe to cope with the economic and social consequences of the Holocaust. Due to the advent of communism immediately after the Holocaust, Eastern Europe needed material assistance for a longer period to care for its Holocaust survivors.*

### EASTERN EUROPE

#### MISSION

1. To enable the individual communities to provide material assistance to Holocaust survivors so that they can live out their lives with dignity and as Jews.
2. To stimulate the reestablishment of religious, cultural, educational and youth activities - which were not encouraged under communism - to help ensure, wherever feasible, a viable and dynamic Jewish life for the future.
3. To help the communities of Eastern Europe to organize themselves effectively.

#### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

1. Eastern Europe can not be seen as a monolith as demographics vary considerably from country to country. Jewish life in some countries will considerably diminish in 20 years, while in others Jewish life is undergoing a resurgence.
2. Recovery of Jewish property confiscated during the Communist era can help to fuel the resurgence of communal life in the region.



3. Recent economic and political changes in Eastern Europe have been momentous, and it is currently unclear how much instability may accompany these changes. JDC will respond to changing needs and will stand ready to revert to other and more creative forms of assistance in Eastern Europe should political conditions necessitate.
4. JDC accepts responsibility for the welfare of younger households only in cases of critical need.

## JDC'S ROLE IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IN EUROPE

### MISSION

In response to:

- current thinking in Europe and initiatives being taken by some of the European Jewish leadership;
- JDC's own observations of the situation based upon numerous meetings and discussions that have taken place among the lay and professional leadership of both JDC and the local communities;
- deliberations that have taken place during the meetings of the JDC Working Group for Community Organization;

the following statement of JDC's mission in Europe is suggested:

*To strengthen the capacities of European Jewish Communities to address issues and problems which affect them either as individual communities or collectively by providing technical assistance for the communities at their request and by assisting them to utilize their professional and lay resources to the fullest.*

## MEANS

This mission will be achieved by JDC's cooperating in the mobilization by the communities of their own resources. The potential areas in which communities may seek to mobilize these resources are:-

- mutual assistance and the pooling of strengths;
- development of leadership (both current and emerging);
- planning in order to achieve financial self-sufficiency;
- creation of fora in which to address pan-European and regional issues.

## CAVEAT

The mission statement is based upon our understanding of the present reality. However, as JDC advances in its exploration and activities and as the local communities develop their own thinking and processes to meet changing circumstances, our mission may need to be reevaluated and modified from time to time.

## COMPONENTS IN JDC'S APPROACH TO ITS MISSION

JDC does not intend to do any deficit financing in Western Europe. Modest funding of special projects at initial stages in the form of seed money may be required in some cases.

Eastern Europe, however, must be viewed as a special case. Unlike most of Western Europe where greater resources do exist, it may be necessary to finance initiatives in Eastern Europe to a greater extent while those communities are reaching towards financial self-sufficiency. JDC still finances large relief and welfare programs in East Europe and this is likely to continue for some time to come.

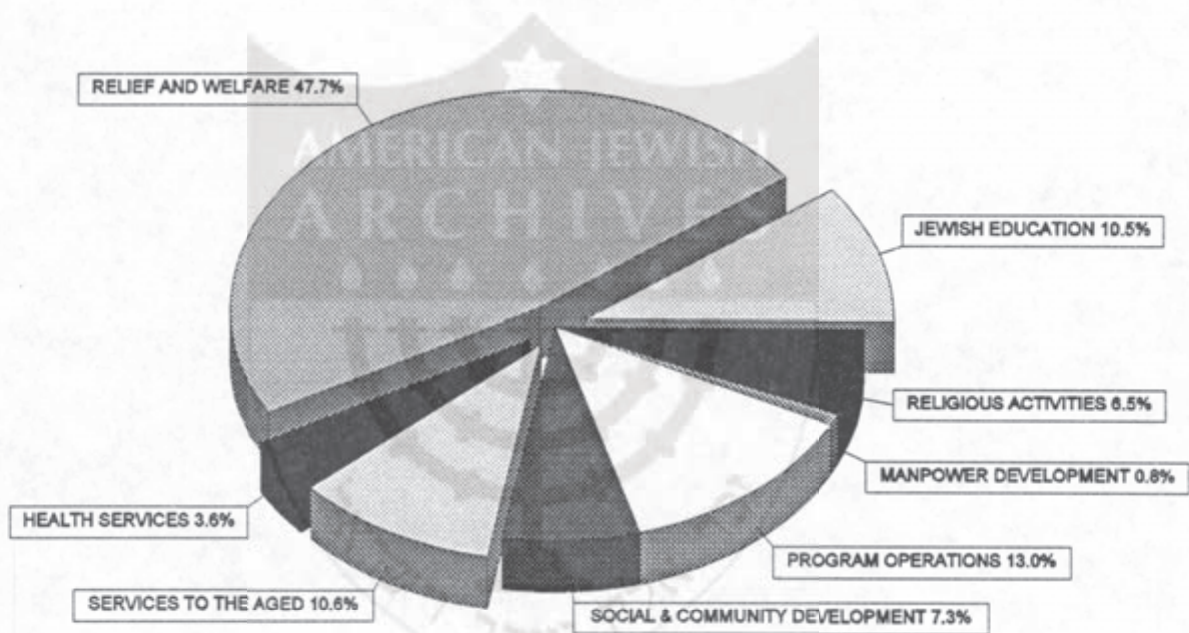
Recognizing that Europe has its own social and organizational culture as well as a long record of achievement, JDC will serve as a catalyst and help communities to tap into and pool their own skills. At the same time JDC will expose local communities to a pool of international talent which can be made available to assist in this work.

JDC proposes to work with several partners in Europe. These include pan-European Jewish bodies such as the European Council, European Union of Jewish Students, the European Jewish Forum and perhaps the European Jewish Congress as well as any other appropriate organizations. At the same time JDC will also be co-operating with local communities through their lay and professional leadership.



# EASTERN EUROPE

Total 1995 Budget \$8,998,000



## BULGARIA

### Fact Sheet

*	<u>Final 1994 Budget:</u>	<u>\$520,600</u>
*	<u>Approved 1995 Budget:</u>	<u>\$457,400</u>
*	Year JDC Began Operations:	1990
*	Total Jewish Population:	approx. 6,000

Approximately 1,700 Jews are over the age of 65.

Over half of the Jewish population lives in Sofia.

There are 750 Jews in Plovdiv and 300 in Varna.

#### Strategy:

To provide relief assistance to the poor and elderly to enable them to maintain reasonable living conditions in a rapidly deteriorating economic situation.

To help the community restore and expand its cultural, educational, religious and youth programs to strengthen Jewish life.

To help train local individuals to effectively run Jewish communal institutions and programs.

#### Significant Characteristics:

During 1992, JDC opened an office in Sofia.



## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### BULGARIA

#### OVERVIEW

The Bulgarian economic situation remains grave, with an expectation of 100% inflation by the end of 1994 and rising unemployment rates. A large majority of pensioners are living below the poverty line since the government cannot find the funds to pay pensions. Political instability has characterized the country as of late, a fact that has aggravated the already tense economic situation.

Bulgarian Jewry is primarily a community of intellectuals and craftsmen with little mercantile tradition. The social and cultural organization SHALOM represents the Jewish community in Bulgaria. SHALOM, a constitutional organization with a democratic infrastructure, is comprised of 18 local branches. The President and Central Board are elected. SHALOM organizes a variety of clubs, events and committees to deal with social and economic issues facing the Jewish community, and runs Jewish education programs.

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

Many elderly Jews have no family in Bulgaria. The burden of dealing with their needs, along with loneliness and health problems, rests entirely with the community. Elderly pensioners living below the poverty line, who either lack pensions or have very low pensions, receive small cash grants each month. The Social Committee of SHALOM evaluates each case and determines eligibility. In 1994, JDC assisted 1,334 pensioners and disabled persons. The new cash assistance policy requiring the signing of a last will and testament in which the heir of an assistee is obliged to refund the value of assistance received resulted in a reduction of the number of assistees from 1,700 in 1993 to 1,334 in 1994.

In 1994, SHALOM will be contributing \$20,000 to help meet the costs of this program.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

Medications are generally available but unaffordable. A government

program which provided free medication for children and chronically ill pensioners terminated in March 1993. New regulations list 140 diseases for which pensioners with extremely low incomes are eligible to purchase medications with a 50% state subsidy from state pharmacies. However, these pharmacies frequently have supply problems. Currently, 800 chronically ill individuals are eligible for SHALOM subsidies of 50% to 100% on local medications, depending on their level of income. In 1994, many chronically ill assistees were supplied with medications and vitamins.

There is a dental clinic in the Jewish school that provides dental services to pensioners in the afternoon. With support from the Central British Fund, additional equipment was purchased this year. The dentist is employed by SHALOM, and pensioners pay only a token fee and laboratory costs.

### **SERVICES TO THE AGED**

In February 1991, JDC helped SHALOM to establish a homecare service for homebound, elderly Jews in Sofia. Through this model program, food supplies are delivered to homebound elderly. A psychotherapist visits regularly to combat depression, as do a Jewish physician, 2 nurses and a dentist. JDC has also helped the community to organize a group of young volunteers to visit the homebound. The total number of people served by the homecare project was increased to 44 persons this year. SHALOM, with funds from JDC, shares the expenses of the homecare program with the Sofia Municipality.

The kitchen which prepares the food for the homecare program also provides subsidized hot lunches for over 100 elderly in the Beit Ha'am.

A "health club" was opened in Sofia in which 50 elderly women and men exercise twice weekly and generally improve their health condition. An additional club was opened in Plovdiv, the first such club in the provinces. Two pensioners will attend a training course in Israel on physical activity for the elderly.

### **JEWISH EDUCATION**

In 1994, 200 children and 20 madrichim attended The Ronald S. Lauder/AJJDC International Summer Camp in Szarvas, Hungary, for 2 weeks. For the summer of 1995, a two-week camp program for 300 children is planned at a camp in Bulgaria. A young woman from Bulgaria who worked as an educational coordinator at the Lauder/JDC facility in Szarvas this past summer will be instrumental in the development of the new program in



Bulgaria.

A Jewish day school with an enrollment of 98 children plus a kindergarten with 25 children were opened in Sofia on September 1, 1992. Demand for the school has steadily grown since then, and over 200 pupils are enrolled for the 1994-95 school year. By agreement with the Sofia Municipality, the schools operate within a public school and kindergarten. Hebrew is taught in 8 classes. Due to the serious economic crisis in Bulgaria, the nutritional quality of the lunch served in the cafeteria is closely monitored to ensure that all children receive at least one balanced meal per day. Children are also provided with regular medical and dental check-ups.

There is a Sunday Talmud Torah where 120 Jewish children study each week.

A Union of Jewish Students in Bulgaria has been established. At the start of 1991, there were 50 members, and 250 students are expected to be reached in 1995. In 1994, funds were allocated for the reconstruction of several rooms in the Jewish community building where a youth center has been opened.

#### **MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT**

Twenty pensioners from throughout Bulgaria were trained as instructors for physical education and other programs in pensioner clubs. The course was given by experts from the Israeli Wingate Institute, with the assistance of JDC/Eshel. A training program on community social services was provided for staff of the Bulgarian Social Services Ministry.

#### **SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

JDC assists SHALOM in covering administrative costs, as its members are not able to support it alone, and the Government of Bulgaria has ceased its funding. SHALOM has succeeded in establishing an extensive social services, educational and cultural program which also encompasses the provinces.

To meet the need for increased Jewish education, JDC has been sending young Jewish volunteers from abroad. The Jewish Service Corps has proven one of the successful JDC projects in Bulgaria. The two-year term of the recent American volunteers, during which a variety of important new community initiatives in Jewish education and Jewish culture were implemented, ended in May 1994. Two new American volunteers arrived in

October 1994. The volunteers make regular visits to provincial towns to enhance Jewish cultural activities; provide guidance in youth camps and Talmud Torahs; and train a core of young madrichim.

SHALOM sponsors cultural activities, clubs, and publications. A community newspaper that provides the link between the different Bulgarian Jewish communities is published every 2 weeks. After 30 years, the Jewish choir was revived this past year.

### **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

The Religious Council of the community has signed a contract with a rabbi from Israel who will come for a one year period. He began his term in August 1994. JDC will fund the rabbi's salary. JDC also provides ritual articles and financial assistance for bar and bat mitzvah programs via the Jewish Religious Council in Sofia. A growing number of children are interested in their Jewish identity.

In 1994, public seders serving hundreds of Jews took place. In addition, the Jewish Service Corps volunteers organized various training programs and educational activities in preparation for Pesach, including a 300-person seder for Sunday school attendees and their families.

### **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

Funds are allocated to cover the costs of the JDC office in Sofia, the related travel costs of the JDC Country Director to Bulgaria, and other costs necessary to effectively monitor and direct the programs.



## HUNGARY

### Fact Sheet

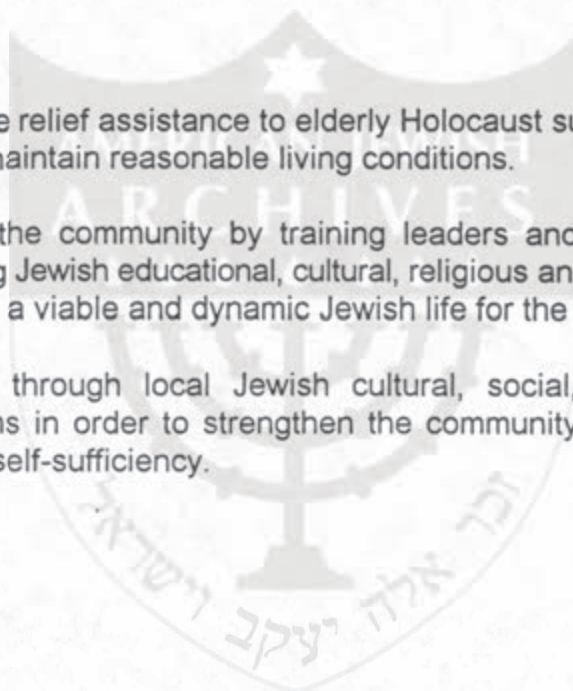
*	<u>Final 1994 Budget:</u>	<u>\$3,243,900</u>
*	<u>Approved 1995 Budget:</u>	<u>\$3,084,300</u>
*	Year JDC Began Operations:	Renewed in 1980
*	Total Jewish Population:	approx. 130,000

### Strategy:

To provide relief assistance to elderly Holocaust survivors to enable them to maintain reasonable living conditions.

To help the community by training leaders and developing and expanding Jewish educational, cultural, religious and youth programs to ensure a viable and dynamic Jewish life for the future.

To work through local Jewish cultural, social, and communal institutions in order to strengthen the community frastructure and promote self-sufficiency.



## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### HUNGARY

#### OVERVIEW

Hungary is among the strongest economies of the Eastern European countries and has managed to secure a good deal of Western investment. However, the economic situation remains fragile and inflation is on the rise. Elections were held in June 1994, and the new government includes the party which initiated the political changes that brought about the first free elections in 1990. The Jewish community is optimistic about the current political atmosphere in Hungary.

The Union of Jewish Communities is the umbrella organization for the 22 Jewish communities in Hungary. JDC finances social services in Hungary via the Hungarian Jewish Social Support Foundation which has an independent Board of Directors.

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

Many of Hungary's Jews are elderly Holocaust survivors and are in poor health, often with lower than average pensions. Without funding provided by JDC, they would be too poor to afford sufficient food, warm clothing, heat and medical attention.

**Monthly Cash Assistance** and **Winter Relief** were provided to 2,510 people in 1994. It is expected that the caseload will increase to 3,000 due to outreach to provincial communities in 1995. In keeping with the recommendations of the Revalidation Report endorsed by the Eastern Europe Area Committee, the sum of monthly cash assistance was raised in 1994 to a level commensurate with the Modest Minimum Income.

In 1994, **Special Cash Grants** were provided to 840 individuals in desperate straits for the purchase of special medications, making urgent home repairs, etc. It is expected that 900 individuals will receive such grants in 1995. A new system for providing emergency household repairs, whereby craftsmen are hired directly by the Foundation, was implemented to ensure more cost-effective services.

All assistees receiving cash support have signed a legal declaration bequeathing repayment to the Foundation subsequent to their demise.



JDC finances a major portion of the **Budapest Central Kitchen's** budget, which serves 1,300 elderly. These meals are eaten at kosher canteens or, for those unable to leave their homes, a meals-on-wheels program delivers 230 meals daily. In 1994, 70 volunteers from the Foundation began to deliver the food packages to homebound elderly. Another programmatic development in 1994 was the hiring of a professional dietician to improve the nutritional quality of the food for the elderly constituency.

JDC supports a small kosher canteen in the town of **Debrecen**, which serves 60 meals daily, plus an additional kosher canteen in the town of **Miskolc**, where 35 meals are provided daily. In the **Szeged Old Age Home**, the kosher canteen supplies meals to 50 residents and non-residents. JDC also helps the Orthodox Community in Budapest to operate a program at the **Hanna Restaurant** to provide food for 175 impoverished elderly.

### SERVICES TO THE AGED

In 1993, JDC's International Development Program completed its non-sectarian comprehensive home care project in conjunction with the Hungarian Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the 8th District of Budapest. Due to the high per capita costs of the Foundation's **Home Care** program which served 17 elderly Jews, JDC sought in 1993 to have all of the Foundation's cases integrated into the municipality's social service network. In 1995, the program is expected to provide 200 elderly with home care services from the municipality. The proposed 1995 budget for this program enables JDC to provide ongoing training seminars and other services for the municipal social workers.

JDC has prioritized enhancing the quality of life for the elderly through pensioner clubs and day care centers. In 1995, five centers, including two facilities opened in 1994, one in Budapest and one in Szeged, will provide 530 lonely, elderly Jews with meals and organized social activities. These programs have been expanded to include exercise, theater performances, lectures and excursions. The new club opened in Szeged is the first such program in the provinces.

JDC helps three Jewish old age homes in Hungary. In **Szeged**, JDC assists with operating costs and provides food and other services to the 20 residents. In Budapest, JDC assists **The Ujpest Home for the Aged** which serves 70 elderly and the Orthodox Community's **Alma Old Age Home** which serves 40 people. In 1994, JDC assisted in the total renovation of the Alma Street Old Age Home and in upgrading the staff of the home. JDC also assisted in upgrading the Ujpest Home.



To create greater social awareness, JDC began a volunteer program whereby members of the community make home visits to the elderly at the old age homes, private apartments and the pensioner clubs. Each Jewish school has a volunteer program. The volunteerism project is now part of the 1994 curriculum at the JDC-supported Anna Frank Gymnasium.

In conjunction with the Jewish Braille Institute, JDC helped organize a program for the visually impaired which operates a library of books and cassettes which is used primarily by the elderly.

### **JEWISH EDUCATION**

The Chanukah Seminar, held in Visegrad, Hungary in December 1993, brought together 151 community leaders and educators from Jewish communities throughout Eastern and Central Europe, giving them the opportunity to learn about Jewish history, religion, tradition, and culture through a variety of media. The program was the first of its kind in the region, and a second such seminar is being developed for 1995.

There are currently 1,200 Jewish children enrolled in Jewish schools and kindergartens in Budapest, an attendance rate that could be increased were spaces available. Both the Yavneh School, a secular Jewish day school supported primarily by the Lauder Foundation, and the American Endowment School, an Orthodox day school established by the Reichmann family, receive technical support and advice from JDC.

JDC provides funding to the **Orthodox Community Talmud Torah and Kindergarten** which offer pre-school and afternoon programs to 60 children, and to the **Anna Frank Gymnasium**, the Jewish Community's high school, which has enjoyed increasing enrollment over the last few years, with 240 pupils registered for the 1994-95 academic year.

This summer marked the fifth anniversary of the **Ronald S. Lauder/AJJDC International Summer Camp** in Szarvas. Approximately 1,800 Jewish children and families from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union participated during the 1994 summer session and family camp, gaining what is in many cases a first exposure to their Jewish heritage. This camp is JDC's greatest educational investment.

The budget for **Jewish Education Projects** finances the JDC Jewish Resource Center which is equipped with audiovisual aids, books and other Judaica and educational resources to serve schools, youth movements and Talmud Torahs in Hungary. The Center serves as the base for outreach projects to Jewish schools, youth movements, and in the future, to the



provinces. The Center is regularly upgraded with new translations into Hungarian and other resources.

A new Director of Jewish Education, an American who formerly served as a JDC Youth Worker in India, began his two-year term in August 1994.

In 1994, JDC enabled the European Union of Jewish Students to open an Eastern Europe office in Budapest, in cooperation with **The Hungarian Union of Jewish Students**. JDC also provides funding for five additional Jewish youth movements in Hungary.

In 1991, JDC established the Pedagogium, or Teachers Training Institute, in conjunction with the Schocken Institute in Jerusalem and the Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest, to prepare educators for Jewish schools in Hungary. It is now a four-year training program with 12 alumni and 62 students.

### **SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The **Hungarian Jewish Social Support Foundation** operates an office, and JDC funds its personnel and support costs, both of which have increased due to inflation and initiatives to professionalize the program.

A new Community Center, with an elected Board of Directors overseeing activity, will open in October 1994 as a result of the partnership between JDC, CBF and the Hungarian Jewish community. The Holocaust Survivor Center, which will have a separate entrance from other Community Center activities, began its crisis intervention activity in January 1994 at a temporary facility.

### **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

In 1994, JDC will provide approximately 2,300 individuals, primarily clients on the Foundation's caseload, with a small **Passover** supplement to purchase matzot and to participate in public seders. JDC also provides **religious supplies** - tallitot, tefillin, siddurim, lulavim, etrogim - to those lacking the means to purchase them. Religious books are purchased for use at the camp and Talmud Torahs.

JDC subsidizes the **Rabbinical Seminary's** operating costs and an adult lecture program in addition to the Pedagogium.

JDC participates in the costs of a **Rabbi for the Orthodox Community** and funds a **shochet** to facilitate the provision of kosher meat for the kosher

canteens.

### **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

JDC operates an office in Budapest. **Program management** costs for the JDC office in Budapest include secretarial and support services provided for missions and translations.





## POLAND

### Fact Sheet

- \* Final 1994 Budget: \$1,080,100
- \* Approved 1995 Budget: \$1,020,800
- \* Year JDC Began Operations: 1982  
(after a lapse of 14 years)
- \* Number of Jews (approximate): 5,000-10,000
- \* Major Centers of Jewish Population:  
Warsaw, Wroclaw, Lodz, Krakow, Katowice

### Strategy:

To ensure the physical and material well-being of Holocaust survivors and enable them to live their lives in dignity and as Jews.

To help local Jewish communities develop and expand cultural, religious and youth programs to strengthen Jewish life.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES



## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### POLAND

#### OVERVIEW

American and European Jewish organizations and the media have sensitized the Polish government to the needs of the small Polish Jewish community. Among many Polish citizens, however, both latent and overt anti-Semitism exist, keeping many Jews from identifying themselves as members of the community despite religious and cultural freedom in the country.

The national Central Jewish Welfare Commission administers the JDC-sponsored welfare program and is comprised of representatives of five major Jewish organizations in Poland: The Jewish Religious Community of Poland (JRCP), The Jewish Social/Cultural Organization of Poland (TSKZ), The Jewish Historical Institute (JHI), The Jewish Combatants' Organization, and most recently, the Association of Holocaust Children.

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

Most of Poland's Jews are elderly Holocaust survivors and are in poor health. Many have no family and have insufficient pensions. In 1994, monthly cash assistance was provided for about 1,580 cases, comprising both couples and individual Holocaust survivors who meet the criteria established by the Central Jewish Welfare Commission. It is expected that 1,473 will receive these grants in 1995. Money transfers of \$90 are mailed to clients from Krakow 2, 4, or 6 times a year. Moreover, JDC has begun to fund the homecare and medical needs of those elderly suffering from severe economic deprivation.

In 1994, efforts continued to establish a proper social service to work in cooperation with the Central Jewish Welfare Commission. The social service staff is comprised of 6 part-time social workers covering almost all regions of Poland. Home visits are now made before accepting new cases, and special needs, including high medical costs, are being better evaluated. The social service has been computerized, facilitating better management of the caseload. In addition, one social worker participated in the Buncher Leadership Program this past year. In 1995, she will dedicate her time to the Jewish Braille Institute of America program that has provided a greater quality of life to those elderly who are visually disabled.



## **ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY RIGHTEOUS GENTILES**

Through a program implemented nine years ago in close cooperation with Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, JDC provides assistance to needy non-Jews who helped Jews during the Holocaust. Yad Vashem determines eligibility for recognition as a Righteous Gentile. This program is primarily supported and operated by the Claims Conference.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

The price of imported medications in Poland has increased, and since 1991, free medication is no longer distributed by Polish clinics. Further, many needed medicaments are not available in Poland. JDC provides for the purchase of medicaments unavailable in Poland or beyond the financial reach of elderly Jewish assistees. In 1994, the Central British Fund provided funds for the purchase of medications to augment JDC's funding.

## **JEWISH EDUCATION**

JDC continues to intensify its Jewish education initiatives. JDC's program concentrates on providing cultural activities through 16 existing TSKZ Jewish culture clubs throughout Poland by helping TSKZ fund performances, speakers, films, and other programs of Jewish interest. For the first time, a Pesach seminar was held at Srodoborow. Between 2,000 and 2,500 people are expected to participate in these cultural programs in 1995. Other cultural activities include JDC support of TSKZ, the Jewish Historical Institute and related organizations in both Jewish cultural programming and community and leadership development. A new 60-member women's section was established.

JDC provides almost fifty percent of the Association of Holocaust Children in Poland's organizational expenses. In addition, JDC is providing technical assistance and training to the Association as it develops a counseling program for its members.

JDC supports TSKZ's summer camp at Srodoborow, which also houses seminars, holiday retreats and special programs throughout the year. Approximately 225 children, youth and adults attended the camp this past summer. In 1994, JDC invited an educator from Midreshet Yerushalayim to teach and provide guidance in enhancing the Jewish content of the summer program. Major renovations of one building at the camp facility were completed with Doron Foundation and Meyerhoff Foundation funding.



Renovations of the main building are currently underway. In addition, 40 Polish children/youth attended the Ronald S. Lauder/AJJDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas, Hungary in 1994.

In 1994, a full array of materials and programs were acquired for The Resource Center for Jewish Education, which was initiated by JDC in 1992 and formally dedicated in 1993. A new professional director began working in May 1994. The director will intensify the Center's outreach activities to serve all Jewish educational and cultural programs in Poland and engage in leadership development. Funding for the Center is provided by JDC, TSKZ and foundations.

### **SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

A new JDC consultant on Jewish education and culture began working with existing organizations in Poland, particularly the TSKZ, in May 1994. He is focusing on helping to intensify Jewish programming and to develop young leadership.

In December 1993, 42 community members attended the JDC-sponsored Chanukah Seminar in Visegrad, Hungary, which targeted Jewish community leaders and educators. The majority of attendees represented the TSKZ but there were others from other Polish Jewish organizations.

### **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

JDC is the primary funder of the Jewish Religious Community of Poland (JRCP) which maintains synagogues and the religious infrastructure in Poland. JDC provides the community with religious supplies - etrogim, lulavim, siddurim, tallitot - as well as kosher food purchased abroad and matzot, matzoh meal and wine for Passover. JDC supports holiday celebrations and other religious activities and enables the community to publish a calendar and almanac.

JDC funds the JRCP's seven kosher canteens which provide 70,800 free meals per year for needy, elderly Jews throughout Poland.

At JDC's encouragement, the JRCP has pursued other sources of income, namely fees for kashrut supervision of vodka.



## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

In early 1993, a JDC office was opened in Krakow with a full-time staff person. JDC funds are provided to cover administration costs of the program. In addition, JDC provides funds and technical assistance to assist the community in its efforts to retrieve confiscated Jewish communal properties.



## ROMANIA

### Fact Sheet

- \* Final 1994 Budget: \$3,085,100
- \* Approved 1995 Budget: \$2,916,000
- \* Year JDC Began Operations: 1945-1948; 1967
- \* Total Jewish Population:
  - as registered with FEDROM 14,250
  - according to JDC & Jewish Agency estimates Between 22,000-24,000
- \* Major Centers of Jewish Population:  
(as registered with FEDROM)  
(All other communities have fewer than 600 Jews)
  - Bucharest 7,480
  - Timisoara 716
  - Iasi 709
  - Oradea 670
  - Cluj 632

### Strategy:

To ensure the quality of physical and spiritual life of elderly Holocaust survivors. JDC seeks to help needy Jews live with dignity in the general context of Romanian life.

JDC, in conjunction with the Romanian Jewish community leadership, financially and professionally supports a specially tailored, quality network of institutional and community services.



## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### ROMANIA

#### GENERAL

This past year marked the end of an era in Romania with the passing of Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen with whom JDC shared a unique, enduring relationship.

Romania enjoyed relative political stability, although the ruling coalition continues to be dependent upon extreme right wing parties. The Jewish community remains anxious about anti-Semitic press. Despite optimistic expectations, the economy continues to stagnate, with imports and exports limited, unemployment rising, increases in the costs of basic foodstuffs and energy, and a lowering of the standard of living of pensioners in particular.

The Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania (FEDROM) is the national, community-based Jewish infrastructure through which JDC operates in Romania.

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

In 1994, regular monthly cash grants were provided to approximately 1,300 elderly assistees, many of whom are in poor health. The same number of assistees are expected to receive these grants in 1995. These assistees generally have no relatives who can help them; most are Holocaust survivors with either very limited or no government pensions. Cash grants are based on a total income level termed the "bareme," and are calculated as a supplement to bring assistees up to the level of the bareme.

Due to the harsh winters in Romania, winter relief was provided in 1994 to 2,520 people to help them pay for heating costs and utilities, potatoes and onions, warm clothing, and other costs related to withstanding the winter season.

In 1994, 2,770 assistees and community workers received 8 food packages each, and 2,770 people are expected to receive food packages in 1995. The packages are critical to survival and include groceries and goods which cannot generally be found in shops. They are distributed for Purim, Pesach, Shavuot, the summer, Succot, the winter, Chanukah, and Tu B'shvat. Four additional packages will be sent to assistees in smaller towns and communities to compensate in part for the lack of kosher canteens which



elsewhere offer a heavily subsidized hot lunch.

FEDROM operates 10 kosher canteens throughout Romania which not only provide nutritional benefit, but also have special value as a place where an elderly, lonely person can meet fellow Jews. These canteens serve in excess of half a million meals per year.

It is anticipated that in 1995, meals will be provided for an estimated 1,356 assistees as well as 485 elderly and staff in 4 old age homes. Of the 1,356 assistees, 660 receive meals on wheels 4 times a week.

In 1994, approximately 3,200 assistees in the communities and old age homes were provided with basic clothing and linens. The same number of assistees is expected to be served in 1995.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

In May 1994, medications which could be purchased with government subsidies were limited to a very small number, most of which are not needed by elderly assistees. Medication and pharmaceutical supplies were purchased in 1994 for 2,634 assistees and residents of old age homes. No change in the number of eligible people is expected during 1995. Some medications are purchased abroad by JDC since many items are scarce in Romania. In addition, JDC seeks donations in large quantities to be used directly or bartered for needed medications.

The medication distribution program was significantly improved in 1994 through the hiring of a professional pharmacist at the Polyclinic in Bucharest. The pharmacist also greatly improved the distribution system of needed medication to clinics in the provinces.

In 1994, a comprehensive medical program provided 1,122 assistees with medical care at socio-medical centers and 337 with homecare assistance. The Polyclinic in Bucharest is being down-sized to adjust to the decrease in population. Nineteen communities have small clinics, some with part-time physicians serving them.

### **SERVICES TO THE AGED**

Currently, two old age homes serve the rapidly aging Jewish population in Bucharest. The Rosen Home, established in 1979, underwent major renovations in 1994, and absorbed thirty-two residents transferred from the Balus Home in October/November 1993. The Rosen Home is expected to



serve 191 persons in 1995 and the Balus Home will serve 57 persons or less. Current procedure is to admit all new residents to the Rosen Home exclusively in order to bring it up to its full capacity of 215 beds and to continue to down-size the Balus Home. Ultimately, as the community dwindles, only the Rosen Home will be left in Bucharest.

Two old age homes continue to function in Transylvania, one in Arad and the other in Timisoara. These homes are small and family-like with relatively good medical services. FEDROM will close either the Timisoara or Arad Home over the next couple of years as the number of residents decreases.

### **SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

After Rabbi Rosen's passing, the positions of Chief Rabbi and President of FEDROM were divided into two separate roles. Prof. Nicolae Cajal was elected as the new President of FEDROM. A search committee has been established to select a Chief Rabbi.

JDC supports the administrative costs of the FEDROM Social Assistance Department in Bucharest, which serves the entire Romanian Jewish Community.

In 1994, JDC recruited and sponsors an Israeli administrator of Romanian descent to work for FEDROM in the capacity of Director-General. He is concentrating on improving administration in general and maximizing income from FEDROM's real estate assets.

### **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

In 1995, 2,700 aged assistees and community workers will receive special Passover packages, and 2,338 needy persons will be provided with a special cash allowance for Passover. Matzah and Matzah meal are ordered from Israel each year and are distributed by FEDROM to the Jewish population.

Religious supplies such as tefillin, tallitot and mezuzot are sent from abroad as well. JDC also provides funds to cover the salary of one full-time shochet from abroad and two kashrut supervisors.

### **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

Funds cover the ongoing expenses for the JDC Romania office in Israel and staff travel to Romania.

## BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA

### Fact Sheet

*	<u>Final 1994 Budget:</u>	<u>\$176,400</u>
*	<u>Approved 1995 Budget:</u>	<u>\$106,400</u>
*	Year JDC Began Operations:	End of World War II
*	Jewish Population:	
	Sarajevo	500
	Other communities in Muslim controlled Bosnia:	<u>200</u>
	Total	700

### Strategy:

To bring to safety any Jews who are in imminent danger and to care for the emergency refugee caseload.

To ensure that food, medicine, and other essential supplies reach Jews who cannot be brought to safety and to make preparations against future threats.

To help communities preserve a suitable infrastructure and network of services despite current difficulties.

To provide for the poor and the aged with appropriate facilities and care.

To train educational, social and religious leadership to foster Jewish cultural activities.

### Highlights:

All rescue and relief operations in Bosnia Herzegovina are carried out in partnership with the Central British Fund - World Jewish Relief.

The unstable political and economic situation throughout the former Yugoslavia makes it difficult to forecast the needs in that region with great accuracy, and the 1995 budget may require modification as local conditions change.



## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

JDC has channeled over 1000 tons of donated relief supplies both to Bosnia and to refugees in Croatia since the beginning of the war (of which about 300 tons were shipped in 1994). While most of the shipments are sent to Sarajevo, where they are distributed on a non-sectarian basis, aid has also been provided to the isolated Jewish communities of Tuzla, Zenica, and Mostar.

Thanks to several extra-budgetary donations to JDC and its partners (including DM 80,000 from Daimler-Benz to La Benevolencia and \$27,000 from the Harvard Hillel to JDC), a ten-ton truck has been purchased to transport supplies from Split to Sarajevo. This has helped reduce transport and warehousing costs.

In addition to the estimated 500 Jews in Sarajevo, there are 111 Jews in Tuzla, 40 in Zenica, and about 40 in Mostar. While JDC continues to assist the Jewish population, the current relief efforts in Bosnia are largely non-sectarian.

The most dramatic JDC rescue operation took place on February 5, 1994, when 296 people were evacuated from Sarajevo in a six-bus convoy which left in the middle of the market bombing that day. This brought the total of people rescued from Sarajevo by JDC to 2,104 (1,001 Jews and 1,103 non-Jews).

Although no major rescue operations are planned for 1995, funding will be required for the rehabilitation of the Sarajevo Jewish community, as the situation there improves.

#### MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT

Wherever possible, JDC will train members of the community for leadership roles.

## CZECH REPUBLIC

### Fact Sheet

*	<u>Final 1994 Budget:</u>	<u>\$198,300</u>
*	<u>Approved 1995 Budget:</u>	<u>\$150,000</u>
*	Year JDC Began Operations:	Returned in 1981
*	Total Jewish Population:	Approx. 3,000

### Strategy:

To enable communities to assist Holocaust survivors so that they can live out their lives in dignity and as Jews and to ensure that the Jewish poor, aged, and handicapped have access to appropriate facilities and care.

To stimulate the renewal of Jewish life and to promote community initiatives for Jewish educational, cultural and social development.

To help the communities organize themselves effectively and to encourage self-sufficiency.

To train communal, religious and educational leadership and to raise the standard of professionalism in Jewish communal work.

### Highlight:

Return of property by the Czech Republic to the Jewish communities yielded approximately 20 properties in Prague and 5 in other communities. 202 additional properties have been identified as properties which could be reclaimed, of which approximately 20% are viable for income production. While the Prague community has become financially independent, JDC continues to assist the smaller communities.



## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### CZECH REPUBLIC

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

The communities of Prague, Brno, and Usti have assumed responsibility for their own social cases over the last few years. There are now approximately 40 relief recipients in small communities in Bohemia and Moravia who receive JDC assistance. Although the number of social cases has decreased, their needs are growing due to inflation. JDC is also working with the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic to develop a comprehensive medical outreach and home care program for the elderly, and a survey is currently being conducted for this purpose.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

An efficient system has been worked out by the JDC office in Vienna to supply pharmaceuticals to the communities in the Czech Republic. The orders placed by the Federation are purchased in Vienna and sent out to the communities for distribution.

#### JEWISH EDUCATION

JDC has promoted Jewish cultural activities and has helped the communities, including Prague, develop many opportunities in this area over the last few years. The Jewish Educational Center in Prague which JDC helped establish now has up to 200 pupils learning Hebrew under the leadership of the Jewish Agency shaliach. A JDC-sponsored graduate of the Buncher Leadership Training Program teaches Judaism to children at this Center. She also conducts mini-family camps at a community retreat house in Krchleby. A second teacher for children is using Jewish texts to prepare a touring puppet theater with support from JDC. In response to a request from Rabbi Sidon, the Rabbi of the Czech Republic, in 1994, JDC sent a rabbi from Israel for one month to the smaller Czech communities to teach Judaism.

JDC subsidizes summer camps conducted by the Czechoslovak Union of Jewish Youth. The students meet for learning and recreation. They also work to restore old Jewish cemeteries or ghetto areas.



The first volume in the JDC-subsidized series of basic Jewish texts, a Czech-Hebrew edition of Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) with commentary, has been published by the Federation's publishing subsidiary Sefer. The second volume in this series, the Haggadah, should be ready for next Passover. JDC is also helping to make the monthly Federation publication, "Rosh Hodesh", a more effective instrument of Jewish education.

### **MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT**

With expanded activities in property restitution and Jewish education, there are increasing needs for investments in training. JDC trains lay and professional leaders through the Buncher Leadership Training Program, the European Council of Jewish Communities, the Israeli Folk Dance Institute, and a mini-machon for youth leaders in cooperation with the Jewish Agency. JDC has also undertaken to train potential educators from outlying communities and the director of the Charles Jordan Home.

A young man is currently studying in Jerusalem to become a rabbi for Brno with some assistance from JDC and an extra-budgetary grant from the Rich Foundation. JDC is sponsoring the training in Israel of a teacher for the Department of Judaica at the Charles University in Prague.

### **SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

JDC supports the infrastructure of the Czech Federation and of local Jewish communities (other than Prague). The support costs for the local communities ensure that the Federation and the community offices have the equipment and supplies they need to carry out their ever-increasing functions.

### **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

Rabbi Sidon of Prague has established himself as a rabbi who is at the same time an integral part of the broader community. He receives a salary from the state, and JDC supports his activities in the outlying communities.

JDC subsidizes the celebration of community Passover seders and sends religious supplies and kosher food from abroad.

### **PROGRAM OPERATIONS**

In addition to the Country Director's regular field visits, this budget also covers other technical assistance provided to the communities.



## CROATIA/SLOVENIA

### Fact Sheet

*	<u>Final 1994 Budget:</u>	<u>\$776,500</u>
*	<u>Approved 1995 Budget:</u>	<u>\$763,000</u>
*	Year JDC Began Operations:	End of World War II
*	Total Jewish Population:	
	Croatia:	Approx. 2,000
	Slovenia:	Approx. 80

### Strategy:

To bring to safety any Jews who are in imminent danger and to care for the emergency refugee caseload.

To ensure that food, medicine, and other essential supplies reach Jews who cannot be brought to safety and to make preparations against future threats.

To help communities preserve a suitable infrastructure and network of services despite current difficulties.

To provide for the poor and the aged with appropriate facilities and care.

To train educational, social and religious leadership to foster Jewish cultural activities.

### Highlight:

The unstable political and economic situation throughout the former Yugoslavia makes it difficult to forecast the needs in that region with great accuracy, and the 1995 budget may require modification as local conditions change.

## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### CROATIA/SLOVENIA

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

Approximately 90 persons receive cash relief in Croatia and Slovenia. JDC is working with the leadership to ensure that all recipients meet the eligibility criteria previously set forth by JDC and the Zagreb Community.

In the past two years, JDC has looked after nearly 900 Bosnian refugees who have come to Croatia. About 85% have moved on to Israel, the United Kingdom, Canada, or elsewhere. JDC still takes responsibility for the elderly, divided families, and recent arrivals. 121 Bosnian refugees are currently being supported by JDC in Croatia. The JDC guidelines to limit refugee relief to those incapable of looking after themselves have been largely successful. In addition, about 30 elderly refugees have already been placed in old age homes (mostly the Svarc Home in Zagreb), but nearly 50 others are on the waiting list.

The Menorah Club, founded by two refugee women, with encouragement from JDC, to manufacture and sell kipot has turned out to be a successful enterprise. Up to 33 refugees have crocheted and sold about 2500 kipot, earning \$7,000 in wages for themselves. They held their first party in July and distributed grants from the profits, allowing members to buy much needed eyeglasses. A new round of publicity has been launched to seek more orders in Europe and the U.S., and the Menorah Club is now looking for new ideas to expand their product line.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

Purchases of medications through JDC-Vienna for the Svarc Old Age Home are being supplemented by extra-budgetary donations of goods-in-kind. JDC plans to lay the groundwork for an emergency pharmacy, which would service all vulnerable members of the community in case of renewed war.

#### SERVICES TO THE AGED

The Svarc Home cares for up to 80 residents with an average age of over 80, many of whom are bed-ridden. There are about 80 people on the waiting list to enter the Home.



JDC is encouraging the community to develop a comprehensive home care and outreach program in Zagreb. An extensive survey of the entire population of Jewish elderly is now underway for this purpose. JDC expects to lay the foundation for a program which will emphasize the needs of those waiting for admission to the Svarc Home.

### **JEWISH EDUCATION**

The summer camp in Pirovac is located near the front line, and although a cease-fire is currently prevailing, it has been regarded as too fragile to permit the resumption of camp activities. The budget covers maintenance costs to keep the camp in readiness in the hope that some camping may resume next summer.

JDC partially supports the Jewish kindergarten in Zagreb which has 11 Jewish children and 13 others who come for the quality of the program. An ORT Computer Laboratory for high-tech training and Jewish education through ORTNET has been installed with JDC cooperation in the Zagreb Community Center. The youth group regularly publishes its own journal, "Motek", with JDC support. JDC helped publish a prayerbook in Hebrew/Serbo-Croat which had not been printed since before World War II as well as a brochure on Judaism in Serbo/Croat.

JDC has sent a rabbinical student twice in 1994 to give lectures and conduct workshops on Judaism throughout Croatia. He reaches out to small communities and brings a taste of tradition to the refugees in Split and Makarska, where he spent Pessach this year. Following a series of lectures at the Szarvas Family Camp in 1994, he spent the High Holidays in Zagreb, Split, and Sarajevo.

Thirty five children from Croatia attended the Ronald S. Lauder/AJJDC International Summer Camp in Szarvas in 1994, and fifty persons participated at the Family Camp at the end of the season.

### **MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT**

JDC sent two candidates from Croatia (Osijek and Split) to the Buncher Leadership Training Program in 1994. Other communal leaders participated in programs offered by the European Council of Jewish Communities. JDC will continue to sponsor the training of lay and professional leadership.

## **SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

JDC supports the infrastructure of the Zagreb Community to enable them to carry out their ever-increasing functions.

## **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

JDC ships kosher food and religious supplies from Israel and sponsors communal seders.

The Jews of Croatia have severely felt the absence of a Jewish educator and have asked JDC for assistance in finding such a person. Recruitment was done both in Israel and the US, and an educator began work in the fall of 1994.

## **PROGRAM OPERATIONS**

This budget covers the travel costs of JDC staff to Croatia.





## SERBIA/MACEDONIA

### Fact Sheet

*	<u>Final 1994 Budget:</u>	<u>\$329,400</u>
*	<u>Approved 1995 Budget:</u>	<u>\$319,200</u>
*	Year JDC Began Operations:	End of World War II
*	Jewish Population:	
	Serbia:	3225
	Serb-controlled Bosnia Herzegovina	<u>170</u>
	Total:	3395
	Macedonia:	Approx. 100

### Strategy:

To bring to safety any Jews who are in imminent danger and to care for the emergency refugee caseload.

To ensure that food, medicine, and other essential supplies reach Jews who cannot be brought to safety and to make preparations against future threats.

To help communities preserve a suitable infrastructure and network of services despite current difficulties.

To provide for the poor and the aged with appropriate facilities and care.

To train educational, social and religious leadership to foster Jewish cultural activities.

### Highlight:

The unstable political and economic situation throughout the former Yugoslavia makes it difficult to forecast the needs in that region with great accuracy, and the 1995 budget may require modification as local conditions change.

## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### SERBIA/MACEDONIA

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

In the present crisis, the number of relief recipients in Serbia has risen to 210. Benefits have also been raised to help the most vulnerable deal with higher prices. Despite its own difficulties, the Serbian Jewish Community has integrated all the Bosnian Jewish refugees who wished to remain in Serbia.

With the help of the Central British Fund - World Jewish Relief and an anonymous donor, 7,000 food packages have been sent in to Serbia with U.N. authorization for distribution to Jewish families. JDC has channeled additional aid donated by European Jewish communities. All the Jewish communities in Serbia have been assisted through this coordinated emergency relief effort. JDC has also shipped food and medicine to Jewish communities in Serb-controlled Bosnia (Doboj, Banja-Luka and Grbavica).

JDC has established through the Federation of Jewish Communities a comprehensive pharmacy to make sure that the chronically ill, the elderly, and the resettled refugees continue to receive essential medical care.

1,000 food packages were distributed as non-sectarian aid to old-age homes and hospitals. Cataract implants provided by a U.S. donor were supplied to an eye clinic in Belgrade.

In view of the current situation in the former Yugoslavia, JDC will continue to provide Emergency Relief to the Jewish community in Serbia in 1995.

#### JEWISH EDUCATION

Throughout this war-time period, there has been a concerted effort to expand community activities. The Community Center in Belgrade has been refurbished with JDC help, so that club activities could flourish. There are Hebrew classes, concerts, womens' programs, a choir, and socialization activities.

The youth group has grown, and madrichim visited from England to help develop activities. A representative of Habonim-Dror comes regularly from Budapest. There is also a thirst for adult education. Jewish educational activities are expected to increase with the arrival of a new rabbi in 1995.



The war situation has created cohesiveness within the small Jewish communities as well. The Jewish community of Novi-Sad has come to life. There is an active choir, and they now offer classes in Hebrew. There, too, JDC is assisting to spruce up the Community Center with the help of an extra-budgetary donation. A new community of more than 100 members has sprung up in Pancevo (near Belgrade), and there are encouraging developments in Subotica.

JDC regularly sends in Jewish education materials, and helped publish the first primer on Judaism in the Serbo-Croat language in many years, with assistance from the Rich Foundation.

The interest in Jewish education and recreation finds a strong outlet in the Ronald S. Lauder/AJJDC International Summer Camp. Approximately 80 Jewish youngsters from Serbia attended the camp this year. At the Family Camp which took place at the end of the season, there were about 200 people from Serbia.

There are plans to further expand Jewish educational activities in 1995.

#### **MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT**

The overall JDC budget for manpower training will decline with the end of Rabbi Aygenmacht's year-round studies. He will take up his duties as full-fledged rabbi in Serbia at the beginning of 1995, after six years of JDC-sponsored studies in Israel.

Plans for 1995 include the training of a future Jewish studies teacher, continuing the active Serbian participation in the Buncher Leadership Training program, and supporting involvement in programs offered by the European Council of Jewish Communities.

#### **SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

JDC supports the infrastructure of the Federation and the local Jewish communities. The support costs for the local communities ensure that the Federation and the community offices have the equipment and supplies that they need to carry-out their ever-increasing functions.

#### **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

Rabbi Aygenmacht, who will be based in Belgrade, will travel to the smaller

communities to teach Judaism and conduct services. JDC will cover the new rabbi's salary and living expenses as well as a basic operating budget.

In addition to shipping needed kosher food and religious supplies, JDC sponsors large communal seders. The demand for these supplies is expected to increase as a consequence of the new rabbi's activities.

#### **PROGRAM OPERATIONS**

This budget covers the travel costs of JDC staff to Serbia and Macedonia.





## SLOVAKIA

### Fact Sheet

*	<u>Final 1994 Budget:</u>	<u>\$149,500</u>
*	<u>Approved 1995 Budget:</u>	<u>\$180,900</u>
*	Year JDC Began Operations:	Returned in 1981
*	Total Jewish Population:	Approx. 2,000

### Strategy:

To enable communities to assist Holocaust survivors so that they can live out their lives in dignity and as Jews and to ensure that the Jewish poor, aged, and handicapped have access to appropriate facilities and care.

To stimulate the renewal of Jewish life and to promote community initiatives for Jewish educational, cultural and social development.

To help the communities organize themselves effectively and to encourage self-sufficiency.

To train communal, religious and educational leadership and to raise the standard of professionalism in Jewish communal work.

## DESCRIPTION OF JDC PROGRAMS

### SLOVAKIA

#### RELIEF AND WELFARE

Approximately 150 assistees in Slovakia receive cash assistance grants from the Jewish Community with JDC assistance. Inflation in Slovakia has been running in excess of 20% a year with the dollar steadily losing purchasing power in a weakening economy. The 1995 budget for cash relief should help maintain the monthly subsidy at the modest minimum income level for all recipients.

JDC subsidies to the kosher kitchens in Bratislava and Kosice enable the communities to provide kosher meals to the poor and elderly.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

An efficient system has been worked out by the JDC office in Vienna to supply medicines to the communities in Slovakia. The orders placed by the Federation are purchased in Vienna and sent out to the communities for distribution.

#### SERVICES TO THE AGED

A comprehensive survey of the elderly in Kosice is being completed by a graduate of the Buncher Leadership Training program with JDC support. JDC is working with the Bratislava community to develop a home care program for needy elderly.

With the help of JDC, pensioners' clubs are functioning in Bratislava and Kosice. Regular meetings and outings are part of the program, and initial efforts to create Jewish libraries are underway. In Kosice, the Jewish Braille Institute of America continues to help the visually impaired through these clubs.

#### JEWISH EDUCATION

During his first year in Bratislava, Rabbi Myers, an American-born rabbi who has learned the Slovak language, has greatly expanded programming in Jewish education. He has been teaching the principles of Judaism to adults



and children. Outreach activities will be extended to the smaller communities in 1995. Rabbi Myers and his wife are running an afternoon Talmud Torah (after-school Jewish educational program). They have also established with JDC support a summer day camp for about 20 youngsters. JDC supports the publication of educational brochures about the Jewish holidays as well as the lively Jewish student newspaper "Hochmes".

In Kosice, JDC has provided assistance to an Israeli Jewish educator who teaches Judaism and Hebrew and has developed Jewish holiday programs for children and young adults. JDC continues to sponsor the Jewish kindergarten in Kosice.

JDC sponsored the attendance of 60 children and madrichim from Slovakia at the Ronald S. Lauder/AJJDC International Summer Camp in Szarvas in 1994. Another 80 persons attended the Family Camp at the end of the season in Szarvas.

JDC also subsidizes summer camps conducted by the Czechoslovak Union of Jewish Youth in Slovakia. The students meet for learning and recreation. They also work restoring old Jewish cemeteries and ghetto areas.

### **MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT**

JDC trains professionals and lay leaders through the Buncher Leadership Training program, the European Council of Jewish Communities, the Israel Folk Dance Institute, and a mini-machon for youth leaders. JDC promotes exchanges with other communities, particularly Prague and Vienna, on issues such as property management. In 1995, JDC plans to focus training efforts on the delivery of social services.

### **SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

JDC supports the infrastructure of the Jewish Federation of Slovakia and of local communities. The support costs for the local communities ensure that the Federation and community offices have the equipment and supplies they need to carry out their ever-increasing functions.

### **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

Although the communities cover the salaries for their rabbis with government funding, additional funds are provided by JDC for educational and religious activities organized by the rabbis. In Bratislava, Rabbi Myers' first year as

rabbi of that community has been productive and successful, and he and his family should continue their work there for years to come. The Kosice community plans to recruit a new rabbi.

JDC subsidizes the celebration of community Passover seders and the shipment of religious supplies and kosher food from abroad.

### **PROGRAM OPERATIONS**

In addition to the Country Director's regular field visits, this budget also covers other technical assistance provided to the communities.





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COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

February 28, 1995  
28 Adar I 5755

Henryka Manes  
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee  
711 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Henryka:

I assume you saw the enclosed. If not, here it is. I suppose that when all is said and done, that's good news.

I was in London a few weeks ago, but I had some assignments for the Liberal Movement and had no time to call on Harris.

I am still running around the country like a whirling dervish, and here I foolishly thought that life would get somewhat easier for me. That clearly was not to be.

Nonetheless, I hope that we will be able to get together to at least have a chat over the phone in the not too distant future.

Fondly,

Alexander M. Schindler

*file*



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RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

February 28, 1995  
28 Adar I 5755

Mr. Michael Harris  
Director  
United Kingdom Jewish Aid and  
International Development  
33 Seymour Place  
London W1H 6AT England

Dear Michael:

Thank you for keeping me abreast of developments. I am grateful to you.

As you may know, I have been rotated off the Joint Board and therefore had to give up my vice-chairmanship of the JDC's effort in this realm.

But I will be back on the Board this year and I will presumably resume my activities. Perhaps on my next journey to London, I can meet Mr. Rubenstein and of course I will want to see you and your dear wife.

Thank you so much for all your efforts in behalf of the Jewish people.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler





#24

# UNITED KINGDOM JEWISH AID AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

9th February 1995

**UKJAID**

33 SEYMOUR PLACE  
LONDON W1H 6AT

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**T. SCARLETT EPSTEIN**

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*Dear Alex,*

As you will know, for the past two years I have been the part time Director of UK Jewish Aid. In this period a great deal of activity has been developed with the considerable help of the Officers and members of the Projects Committee, and of course from my Secretarial aides. In the light of what has been achieved and particularly the great potential for our work, it has been decided by the Council to appoint a full time Director.

As I did not wish to take on this responsibility, the post was advertised and it has now been decided to appoint Mr Philip Rubenstein, who will be commencing his duties on the 1st March 1995.

Mr Rubenstein has previously been the Director of the All-Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group and for the past four years has been the head of External Affairs for the Advertising Standards Authority. Particularly in the former capacity he has developed broad experience of the Anglo-Jewish communal scene. He was also for a period a member of our Council.

I very much hope to retain my association with UK Jewish Aid and would like to be able to continue to develop certain aspects of the important work in which we are engaged. I must extend my thanks to all who have assisted me in the many projects with which we have jointly been associated, and look forward to your continued involvement in different aspects of our work.

Yours sincerely,

*Michael Harris*

**MICHAEL HARRIS**  
**Director**

gpc

February 16, 1995  
16 Adar 1 5755

Michael Schneider, Executive Vice President  
American Joint Distribution Committee  
711 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Michael:

The news that Arnon Mantver has been selected to represent JDC in Israel is wonderful but, for me, at least, a source of mixed blessings. I am delighted for the JDC and Arnon. for he is an extraordinary individual who will serve JDC with distinction.

On the other hand, for the past six or seven years I have worked with Arnon on the JAFI Budget and Finance Sub-Committee on Aliyah and Klitah and he is most impressive. I will miss his presence and input in this critical area of concern.

Arnon is a superb choice for JDC and we are fortunate to have him come on board. I wish him well and look forward to working with him in behalf of JDC.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Ambassador Milton A. Wolf  
Arnon Mantver