



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
A DIVISION OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

MS-630: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler Digital Collection, 1961-1996.

Series A: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1961-1996.

Box
9

Folder
9b

North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry, 1980-1989.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

March 4, 1985

~~Fred Cohen~~

Ruth Harrison

Enclosed herewith is a check for \$500.00 from Dr. Robert Schwartz, 3677 Central Avenue, Suite D, Fort Myers, Florida 33901. This is for our Project REAP to assist Ethiopian Jewry. Please credit accordingly.



March 4, 1985

Dr. Robert Schwartz
3677 Central Avenue
Suite D
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Dear Dr. Schwartz:

Rabbi Agin has most graciously forwarded to us your generous contribution of \$500.00 for Project REAP, the special fund we have created to assist Ethiopian Jewry. I write to express my heartfelt appreciation for this gift which is tangible evidence of the care and concern you feel in regard to the plight of these people. Many, many thanks for your thoughtfulness.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Rabbi Solomon Agin

TEMPLE BETH-EL

Affiliated with The Union of American Hebrew Congregations

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February 28, 1985

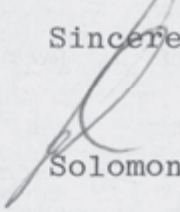
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Alex:

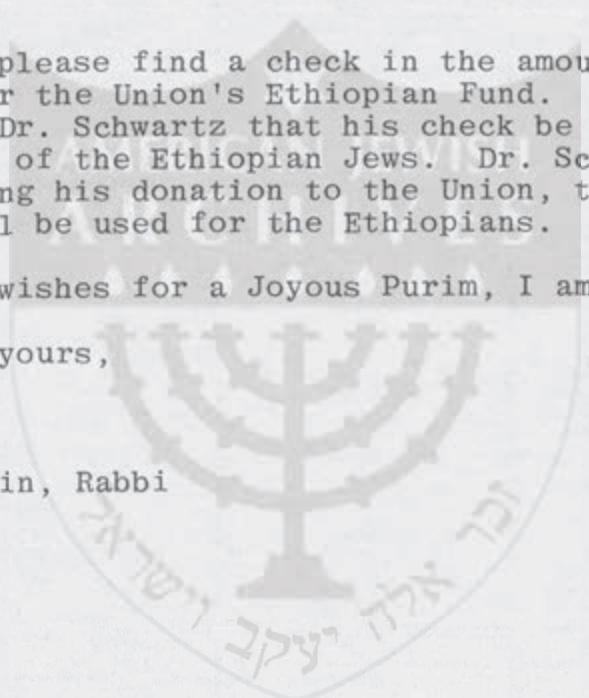
Enclosed, please find a check in the amount of \$500.00 for the Union's Ethiopian Fund. It is the desire of Dr. Schwartz that his check be used toward the plight of the Ethiopian Jews. Dr. Schwartz feels that sending his donation to the Union, the total amount will be used for the Ethiopians.

With good wishes for a Joyous Purim, I am

Sincerely yours,

 Solomon Agin, Rabbi

SA:je



cc Richard
Cohen

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

February 28, 1985

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

The enclosed invoice is merely a formality for our own records. We were pleased to be able to offer our services in the worthy cause of Ethiopian Relief. I thank you for the letter of appreciation you sent us earlier.

Sincerely,

Hersch Wartik

Hersch Wartik



HERSCH WARTIK inc

141 EAST 33RD STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10016 • 212-685-4250

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

INVOICE

Job #2750

February 28, 1985

Prepare "Light One Candle" ad for Ethiopian relief

\$482.00

No charge for our services



MARK O. HATFIELD, OREG., CHAIRMAN

TED STEVENS, ALASKA
LOWELL P. WEICKER, JR., CONN.
JAMES A. MCCLURE, IDAHO
PAUL LAXALT, NEV.
JAKE GARN, UTAH
THAD COCHRAN, MISS.
MARK ANDREWS, N. DAK.
JAMES ABDONOR, S. DAK.
ROBERT W. KASTEN, JR., WIS.
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JIM SASSER, TENN.
DENNIS DE CONCINI, ARIZ.
DALE BUMPERS, ARK.

J. KEITH KENNEDY, STAFF DIRECTOR
FRANCIS J. SULLIVAN, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

February 26, 1985

cc: to David S

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

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

We appreciate very much the fine work you are doing in your organization as well as the work of David Saperstein, whose sound advice and counsel we were fortunate to have before our departure to Ethiopia earlier this month and whose company we enjoyed during our travels in that country. I am particularly impressed with his commitment to improving the quality of life for Ethiopia's Jews while they remain in that country and his work to promote their immigration to Israel.

I look forward to seeing you in the future.

Sincerely,

Dennis De Concini
DENNIS DeCONCINI
United States Senator

DDC/Y

*Good. -
I met with him -
for a brief drink at
the King David.
He seemed pleased.
Dear*

Ethiopia

February 11, 1985

Mr. Edward Finkelstein
R.H. Macy & Co., Inc.
151 West 34th Street
New York, New York 10001

Dear Ed:

I thanked G.G. when she wrote to tell me that a check would be forth-
coming from Macys for the Union's Ethiopian Relief Appeal. The check
has been received today and I write to express to you and all of your
colleagues deepfelt appreciation for your generosity. The cause is
a great one and thanks to caring and concerned people such as you and
your colleagues at Macys, as well as the thousands who have responded
to our appeal, perhaps we can help to save some lives.

With gratitude and fondest regards from house to house, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

E. Chaspe

The Executive Board of the UAHC salutes the State of Israel and all those involved with Operation Moses -- with the rescue of thousands of our Brothers and Sisters from Ethiopia and from the refugee camps. Only Israel would place the rescue of Jews as a first priority when Israel itself continues to face the demands of defense crises, the demands of a very troubled economy, and a host of internal pressures for inaction.

But Israel did act and continues to act thereby fulfilling the highest ethical commands of the Jewish tradition, and by their action refuting the great lie which would taint Zionism with the accusation of Racism.



Done

The executive board of the U A H C
salutes the state of Israel and all
those involved with operation Moses --
with the rescue of ~~over~~ thousands
of our Brothers & Sisters from Ethiopia
& from the refugee camps ~~of in the area~~
Only Israel would place the
rescue of Jews as a first

Resolutions
on tape
follow with
this

Passed 2/4/85
Exec Com
U A H C

priority when Israel itself continues
to face the demands of ~~these~~ defense crises,
defense policy, ~~the demands of~~ the acquisition of
the demands of a
very troubled economy, and a host
of internal pressures for inaction.

~~But~~ ^{But} Israel did act and continues
to act thereby fulfilling the highest
ethical commands of Jewish Tradition,

(3)
and ^{by their action} ~~thereby~~ refuting the great lie which
would taint zionism with the
accusation of Racism.



February 7, 1985

Mr. Ivan Loder
The Spiritual Assembly of
the Bahá'is
Post Office Box #846
Wilmington, Delaware 19899

Dear Mr. Loder:

Rabbi Schindler was good enough to show me your kind letter, and I want to add a personal word in his behalf and mine to tell you that a contribution from the Bahá'ís is particularly valued by us.

We feel a deep sense of solidarity with you and it is most appropriate that we are able to feel empathy for the pain of others as well.

Thank you very much for your letter and your generous contribution.

Cordially,

Albert Vorspan

AV:rh

bcc; Rabbi A. Schindler ✓
Aron Hirt-Manheimer

The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of
Wilmington, Delaware
Post Office Box 846
Wilmington, Delaware 19899

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

We were given your name and address by
a local synagogue here in Wilmington. Individual
in our community as well as the Spiritual Assembly
itself have made contributions totaling the \$70 of
the enclosed check.

Our Bahá'í Community is neither large
nor wealthy but we know that the mighty ocean
of compassion and assistance needed so desperately
by the people of Ethiopia is made up of countless
drops. We welcome the opportunity to of help. ✓

Many thanks for directing our contribution
to the correct channels.

\$70

Sincerely,
Loran Looker
Treasurer



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS—CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

To: Regional Directors
Commission on Social Action

From: Albert Vorspan

Date: February 5, 1985

Subject: ETHIOPIAN PROJECTS

We are deeply grateful for the extraordinary help that our regional offices have given in our push for Ethiopian relief. You will be pleased to know that the UAHC has raised nearly \$200,000 for general Ethiopian famine relief plus several thousand for our own PROJECT REAP (Jewish doctors from the United States working in Jewish villages in Gondor).

The first Abie Nathan village has been so successful that he is now proceeding to establish five more to house a total of 60,000 people in distress. The tents are inscribed "FROM JERUSALEM WITH LOVE" and the villages are well lighted, include clinics and have evoked the admiration of all concerned, including the Ethiopian government.

Attached is the text of an article that will appear in the next issue of *Reform Judaism*.

Chairman
Harris Gilbert
Director
Albert Vorspan
Associate Director
Rabbi David Saperstein

●
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF
TEMPLE SISTERHOODS
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF
TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS
NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION
OF TEMPLE YOUTH
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
TEMPLE ADMINISTRATORS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
TEMPLE EDUCATORS
AMERICAN CONFERENCE
OF CANTORS
ASSOCIATION OF REFORM
ZIONISTS OF AMERICA

R E S C U E I N E T H I O P I A

While the drama of Israel's historic rescue of the Jewish community of Ethiopia was playing out in secret -- and then on the front pages of the world's newspapers -- another Jewish action was taking place on behalf of victims of famine and disease on the parched plains of Ethiopia.

Here, too, a group of Israelis was involved, led by a maverick humanitarian named Abie Nathan. Nathan, who was born in Iraq and raised in India, served as an Israeli fighter pilot during the War of Independence. Once dubbed "the world's smallest peace organization," for his numerous single-handed attempts to bring peace to the Middle East, he made a daring flight to Egypt during the tense period preceding the 1967 war, carrying a peace proclamation signed by 60,000 Israelis. Unfortunately, at that time, President Nasser refused to see him. But since then his private humanitarian campaigns have been more successful.

In the early 1970s he raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in Israel to provide relief for starving Nigerians in Biafra and for the victims of war and hunger in Cambodia. For many years he has operated a "Peace Ship" staffed by an international crew of volunteers that broadcasts music and peace messages in Hebrew, Arabic and English from international waters off the Mediterranean coast.

When, in late 1984, Nathan first learned of the starvation in Ethiopia, he broadcast an appeal from his Peace Ship and within days raised \$100,000 from Israeli citizens. He then flew to London - Ethiopia does not recognize Israel - and persuaded Ethiopian consular authorities to grant him a visa. When he landed in the Ethiopian capital he said simply, "I want to help." Local officials flew him to a drought-stricken area where he inspected existing camps and assessed their needs.

When he returned to Israel and then Europe to gather the supplies he needed to launch his non-sectarian relief operation, Nathan called Rabbi Stephen Schafer, director of the youth division of the UAHC and a long-time friend and supporter. Would the UAHC help, he asked. On December 2, the UAHC Board of Trustees passed a resolution, declaring that the UAHC "expresses its profound gratitude for the moral audacity of Abie Nathan, Israeli humanitarian, in seeking to establish a visible Jewish presence in Ethiopia by creating a tent village in which Ethiopians of all backgrounds will be sheltered and nurtured by doctors and medical personnel who volunteer within Israel and the American Jewish community; and pledges its active support for this imperative initiative by undertaking to raise at least \$100,000 from concerned individuals within our community and the Jewish public at large. These funds will be added to those already raised by the Israeli public."

On Sunday, December 16 -- exactly two weeks after the resolution was adopted -- a UAHC advertisement in *The New York Times* headlined, "Light one candle, save one life. A Jewish response to the famine in Ethiopia," detailed Nathan's efforts and called upon Jews to support him.

The response of the Reform Jewish community was immediate and contagious. HUC-JIR students in New York raised \$2500. Rabbis preached sermons and wrote letters to congregants; religious school children gave money to Karen Ami projects for Ethiopian relief; doctors volunteered to serve; and a television station offered to produce a public service advertisement at no charge. Within one month, more than \$100,000 had been contributed by individuals and Reform synagogues across the country.

Nathan's first visit to the famine region of Ethiopia had convinced him that what was needed most was shelter and trained personnel to feed the starving and nurse the sick. Emergency food supplies and medicines were reaching the refugees, but adequate shelter was in short supply, especially tents - hospital tents, kitchen tents, family tents - and mattresses. With the first \$25,000 received from the UAHC, Nathan chartered a plane and (during Chanukah) flew to Ethiopia with a crew of Israeli experts and enough supplies to build and house a tent city for ten thousand refugees.

After the 43 tons of supplies were unloaded, the trucks set out for Harbu, 400 kilometers north of Addis Ababa. There Nathan and his crew, supplemented by local laborers, built their tent city and moved 8,000 people into the 800 white tents stencilled in red with a star of David and the words, "From Jerusalem with Love." Water was connected, electric power was generated and the filthy, disease-ridden slum nearby was levelled. When Ethiopian authorities saw what Nathan and his Israeli team had built, they asked him to build five more tent cities.

That request reached Nathan during a visit to the United States early in January, during his meetings with UAHC officials. At that time, he received a \$50,000 check from Rabbi Schindler, representing the more than 1,000 individual contributors who had responded to *The New York Times* advertisement. As Rabbi Schindler remarked at that time, "Abie Nathan is proof of our belief that one person can make a difference."

Contributions should be sent to UAHC Ethiopian Relief, 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021.



Allop

February 4, 1985

Rabbi Solomon Agin
Temple Beth-El
Post Office Box 972
Cape Coral, FL 33910

Dear Sol:

Thank you for forwarding the \$100.00 gift from members of Temple Beth-El for our effort in behalf of Ethiopian Jews. ~~This~~ gift is deeply appreciated and we express heartfelt thanks to you and to your membership for all of their efforts in regard to Ethiopian Jewry.

I was pleased to learn that you intend to begin an Outreach program in Cape Coral just before Passover. Good luck, I know that members of our Outreach Commission will want to be of assistance and they will want to be kept apprised of your efforts.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

TEMPLE BETH-EL

Affiliated with The Union of American Hebrew Congregations

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January 30, 1985

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

Dear Alex:

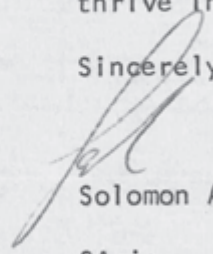
Enclosed, please find two (2) checks each in the amount of \$50.00 towards the plight of the Ethiopian Jews. It appears that some of the membership donated to the Sisterhood Project and others to the Operation Moses of the United Jewish Appeal. My concern is that they give and with a full heart.

There is no doubt in my mind that it was your leadership that inspired others to get involved. This, it was the Reform Movement that once again came to the forefront.

On another subject, I wish to inform you that Outreach will be introduced to the community prior to Passover. The Board of Directors endorsed the program that I presented as a result of the regional convention last November.

With best wishes as the Movement continues to grow and thrive in this most crucial period.

Sincerely yours,


Solomon Agin, Rabbi

SA:je
Enclosures

February 1, 1985

Edith J. Miller

Ruth Harrison

In a covering letter Rabbi Solomon Agin indicated these two checks for \$50.00 each are for the plight of Ethiopian Jews and, therefore, should be credited to Project REAP. We will say thank you from this office inasmuch as there were other items to be acknowledged in his covering letter.



Edith J. Miller

✓
January 25, 1985

Fred Cohen

Enclosed herewith is a check payable to the UAHC. It was received from Rabbi Ira Youdovin and he indicates it is for our Ethiopian Relief Project. The signator is Judy Byrd and the address is noted on the check. Diversified Health Services, The Florida Agency, 5960 Central Avenue, Suite B, St. Petersburg, Florida 33707.



G.G.

January 25, 1985

Ms. G.G. Michelson
Senior Vice President
R.H. Macy & Co., Inc.
151 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Dear G.G.:

How lovely to hear from you and to learn that Macy's will contribute \$1,000 to the UAHC Ethiopian Relief Appeal. I am deeply grateful to all of you for helping us in our effort to feed and care for the starving community in Ethiopia.

Lisa is delighted to be back at Macy's. She feels that she is among friends.

With fondest regards from all of us, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

R. H. Macy & Co., Inc.

G. G. MICHELSON
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

151 WEST 34TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10001

January 18, 1985

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
President
Union of American Hebrew
Congregations
838 5th Ave.
New York, NY 10021

Dear Alex:

Ed sent me your note and the ad on the Ethiopian Relief Appeal. Macy's will donate \$1,000 and the check will be sent to you shortly.

It's nice to see Lisa around here again! My best to the family.

Sincerely,



GGM:vr

E. Schindler

January 16, 1985

Dr. Solomon S. Bernards, Director
Friends of Cong. Mevakshei Derech of Jerusalem
225 Park Avenue, South - 17th Floor
New York, New York 10003

Dear Sol:

Thank you for your letter of January 13 in regard to Abie Nathan's work. It is a remarkable undertaking. We of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations are proud to be a part of it.

You may have missed an advertisement which was placed in the New York Times by the UAHC, some weeks ago. It appeared on the back page of the Sunday Week in Review, I enclose herewith a copy. The funds which we are receiving here at the UAHC are for famine relief and are being used to underwrite the work that is being done by Abie Nathan.

Again, my thanks to you for writing. Warmest regards.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

FRIENDS OF CONG. MEVAKSHEI DERECH OF JERUSALEM

225 Park Ave., South, 17th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003 (212) 674-7400, Ext. 1317

DR. SOLOMON S. BERNARDS, Director

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Utica, NY

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New York, NY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SHAPIRO
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New York, NY

DR. DANIEL THURSZ
Washington, DC

RABBI ARYEH WINEMAN
Derby, CT

RABBI ISAIAH ZELDIN
Los Angeles, CA

RABBI GERALD L. ZELIZER
Metuchen, NJ

Jon 13, 1985
Dear Alex
I was very much
impressed with Abie Nathan's
work as it was articulated at
the press conference at your
HQ, and reported in the
Jewish Week -

To what instrumentality
does one make out one's
gift to Nathan's noble work
in Ethiopia - I assume
it's some American vehicle -

All the best - you're
doing a bangup job!

WWS

Sol

Al Kooper

January 15, 1985

Mr. David A. Levine
2001 Wellington Court
Westbury, NY 11590

Dear Mr. Levine:

Thank you for taking the time to write after you heard me on the Barry Gray show. I am grateful for your thoughtfulness.

Thank you, too, for offering your services in the vast task to be done in regard to Ethiopia. We will keep your name and offer on file in the event we are able to send volunteers but at the moment, the government of Ethiopia is not permitting such volunteer programs of on-site assistance.

With appreciation and every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

E.J. Miller

1/15/85

Ruth Harrison

FOR LIST OF PEOPLE WHO VOLUNTEERED TO HELP IN RE ETHIOPIA...

David A. Levine
2001 Wellington Court
Westbury, NY 11590

516-333-4494

retired person in good health - member of a temple in westbury which is
not reform ---in good health -- was supply sgt. ww2.....

Am told you are keeping list...



FROM THE DESK OF



Acknowledge
At present Ethiopian govt
does not allow volunteers
in.
If there should be any looking
we'll be in touch.
(Give name to
Ruth who
keeps list)

2001 Wellington Court
Westbury, N. Y. 11590
January 9, 1985

Rabbi Schindler
Union of American Hebrew Cong.
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Rabbi:

I heard you this afternoon on Barry Gray's show on WMCA Radio.
You and Abbe Nathan were wonderful - as usual.

I am a member of Temple Sholom here in Westbury and I wish to
offer my help in the Ethiopian task ahead. I am a retired person
and served in the US Army for over 5 years during WW2 as a supply Sgt.

Please call me if you feel I can help you. I am imperfect ~~xxxx~~
health and my Rabbi Moishe Aranov will vouch for me.

Good luck and keep up your good work for all Judiasm.

Yours sincerely,



David A. Levine

516 333 - 4494

I just returned from 2 weeks in Israel with my wife.

Edith J. Miller

1/14/85

Fred Cohen

Enclosed is a check for \$10. for UAHC Ethiopian Relief from Linda Van Raalte
149 6th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11271. This is an additional gift from the students
at HUC-JIR.



Jan 7, 1984

Dear Edie,

enclosed is another check for the Ethiopian relief fund, from one of our students at the college.

So far as the "missing \$200" is concerned; I should know what happened by the end of this week. As soon as I know, I'll let you know. None the less I'm very pleased with the response, as we all should be.

Thanks for letting me know of the correction on the amount.

I'll stay in touch, as always

Love
Barney

MEMORANDUM

From Edith J. Miller
To Fred Cohen
Copies Barney Brickner
Subject ETHIOPIAN RELIEF FUND/UAHC

Date 12/21/84

The enclosed envelope marked \$1700. from the HUC-JIR Community of New York represents gifts to the Ethiopian Relief Fund from the students. No matter which way I count the funds in this envelope I come out with \$1500. --\$1469. in checks and \$31. in cash. By means of a copy of this memo I am advising Barney of the \$200. difference.

Be that as it may, please give me an extra xerox copy of all of the checks enclosed plus a note of \$31. cash so I can send it on to Barney for checking. There's no reason to hold up a deposit of the funds received....we'll have check copies and the cash is one \$1. bill, one \$10. bill and one \$20.

Thanks.

Ε



Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100

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CASH

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1,500.00 *





Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE -- JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Richard Cohen
(212) 758-6969

RABBI SCHINDLER ASSAILS ORTHODOX RABBIS' DEMAND THAT ETHIOPIAN JEWS UNDERGO CONVERSION IN ISRAEL

NEW YORK, Jan. 10 -- Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, said today he was "outraged" by "the demands of some Orthodox groups in Israel that recently-arrived Ethiopian Jews undergo rituals of conversion."

In a statement commenting on news reports from Israel that new immigrants from Ethiopia are being required to undergo ritual immersion and, for males, a new ritual circumcision, Rabbi Schindler declared:

"Such demands are both offensive and humiliating to a Jewish community that has guarded its Jewish identity for some 2,000 years in the face of persecution, poverty and isolation from the rest of the Jewish world.

"The historic Operation Moses that has brought thousands of Beta Israel to the Promised Land is based on the fact that these people are Jews, recognized as such by the rabbinate and the government of Israel. Their immigration to Israel has been made possible by the Law of Return, for which they qualify as Jews entitled to citizenship in Israel.

"Why, then, must the Ethiopian Jews be subjected to the insulting demand that they prove their Jewishness again by undergoing conversion? I see no reason for it and I join the Beta Israel in rejecting this procedure.

"For 2,000 years the Jews of Ethiopia maintained their religious heritage, read the Torah, kept the Sabbath, and observed the various Biblical feasts and fasts and ritual purification. It is a bitter irony that on their arrival in the land they have dreamed of and prayed for over the generations, they must face a challenge to their Jewishness that is demeaning and degrading."



Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"Such demands are both offensive and humiliating to a Jewish community that has guarded its Jewish identity for some 2,000 years in the face of persecution, poverty and isolation from the rest of the Jewish world.

"The historic Operation Moses that has brought thousands of Beta Israel to the Promised Land is based on the fact that these people are Jews, recognized as such by the rabbinate and the government of Israel. Their immigration to Israel has been made possible by the Law of Return, for which they qualify as Jews entitled to citizenship in Israel.

"Why, then, must the Ethiopian Jews be subjected to the insulting demand that they prove their Jewishness again by undergoing conversion? I see no reason for it and I join the Beta Israel in rejecting this procedure.

"For 2,000 years the Jews of Ethiopia maintained their religious heritage, read the Torah, kept the Sabbath, and observed the various Biblical feasts and fasts and ritual purification. It is a bitter irony that on their arrival in the land they have dreamed of and prayed for over the generations, they must face a challenge to their Jewishness that is demeaning and degrading."



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Richard Cohen
(212) 758-6969

RABBI SCHINDLER ASSAILS ORTHODOX RABBIS' DEMAND THAT ETHIOPIAN JEWS UNDERGO CONVERSION IN ISRAEL

NEW YORK, Jan. 10 -- Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, said today he was "outraged" by "the demands of some Orthodox groups in Israel that recently-arrived Ethiopian Jews undergo rituals of conversion."

In a statement commenting on news reports from Israel that new immigrants from Ethiopia are being required to undergo ritual immersion and, for males, a new ritual circumcision, Rabbi Schindler declared:

"Such demands are both offensive and humiliating to a Jewish community that has guarded its Jewish identity for some 2,000 years in the face of persecution, poverty and isolation from the rest of the Jewish world.

"The historic Operation Moses that has brought thousands of Beta Israel to the Promised Land is based on the fact that these people are Jews, recognized as such by the rabbinate and the government of Israel. Their immigration to Israel has been made possible by the Law of Return, for which they qualify as Jews entitled to citizenship in Israel.

"Why, then, must the Ethiopian Jews be subjected to the insulting demand that they prove their Jewishness again by undergoing conversion? I see no reason for it and I join the Beta Israel in rejecting this procedure.

"For 2,000 years the Jews of Ethiopia maintained their religious heritage, read the Torah, kept the Sabbath, and observed the various Biblical feasts and fasts and ritual purification. It is a bitter irony that on their arrival in the land they have dreamed of and prayed for over the generations, they must face a challenge to their Jewishness that is demeaning and degrading."

STROBER / RICHARD Advertising

30 East 60th Street New York, NY 10022 (212) 758-6996

January 9, 1985

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Alex:

Here is the bill from The New York Times for the Ethiopian Relief ad. It comes to \$18,633.88, which takes into account the 20 percent reduction given to charities. There was no commission on this ad. Please instruct the accounting department to do a check in that amount to Strober/Richard Advertising, and I will pay the bill.

Sincerely,

Rich
Richard Cohen

RC:cl

*OK
Guter
that's for ad
give check to her ~ Gail
to send to Didi.*

Ed Schindler

✓

January 7, 1985

Cantor Jill Spasser
106 Barchester Way
Westfield, NJ 07090

Dear Jill:

I can understand your plaint concerning our recent communication asking for support for the starving Ethiopians but you see, our communication was sent to those and only to those who were addressed in the superscription. In other words, we sent our letter to rabbis, and to chairpersons of Social Action Committees and to the others who were listed. What probably happened is that someone replicated our letter and sent it to others in your congregations as well. Under those circumstances, I believe, our memorandum was appropriately addressed.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Jill Spasser Jan. 1, 1985
106 Barchester Way
Wetfield, NJ 07090

Dear Mr. Rothchild & Rabbi Schindler,

I have received your communication dated December 10, 1984 asking for support for the starving Ethiopians. A check from our family is enclosed.

I am writing to you specifically to point attention to those addressed in your letter i.e. Rabbis, Social Action Chairs etc. Do you not think it would be more polite to address the letter to "Clergy" or Rabbis, Cantors etc. It seems to me that our branch of Jewish Clergy is constantly overlooked. Although this might have been an oversight at this difficult time I want you to be aware of my feelings & those of most Cantors.

Yours Respectfully,
Jill Spasser
she is a cantor \$50

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

21 EAST 40th STREET • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016 • (212) 684-4990

January 1985

Dear Colleague:

On January 7, national Jewish organizations involved in assisting Ethiopian Jews met in New York to discuss a common policy in regard to the cessation of rescue efforts. Representatives of the Israeli government, NJCRAC, the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, the UJA, the UIA, and the Reform Movement were among those in attendance.

A consensus was reached on the following points:

1. Publicity on rescue efforts of Ethiopian Jews should be minimized. At most, public statements should indicate that we shall not rest until all Ethiopian Jews are accounted for.
2. In general, we should refrain from comment when asked by the press about the breakdown of the rescue operation. "Since there are lives at stake, we have no comment" was seen to be an appropriate response for most situations.
3. There should be no public discussion now attempting to assign blame for what has happened. These matters are better left until later when all Ethiopian Jews have been brought to Israel.
4. Fund-raising efforts should stress the cost of absorbing the Ethiopian Jews in Israel, rather than the cost of bringing them out of Ethiopia. Dramatic statements about "ransoming Ethiopian Jews" should be especially avoided.
5. There should ^{be}/no call now for pressure by the American government on the Sudan or Egypt. We should not request assistance from our senators or public officials, and we should not engage in public demonstrations.


Obviously, the above policy was not an attempt to maintain secrecy. The problems with the rescue operation have been public knowledge for some time. However, there was agreement that if the issue is downplayed, the press will lose interest and move on to other matters. This in turn may make possible the resumption of the evacuation. On the other hand, continued discussions -- and in particular, public disagreements -- in the Jewish community are likely to have a ripple effect, and will be picked up by the general press.

Of course, public calls for support of general famine relief in Ethiopia and Africa continue to be in order, and in fact are now more important than ever.

Your cooperation on the above points would be greatly appreciated. For further information, feel free to contact the UAHC, ARZA, or CCAR offices.


Joseph B. Glaser


Albert Vorspan


Eric H. Yoffie

OFFICERS:

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Sidney L. Regner, Executive Vice President Emeritus
New York, NY
Jacob R. Marcus, Honorary President
Cincinnati, OH

December 31, 1984

Mr. Edward Finkelstein
R.H. Macy Company, Inc.]
Herald Square
New York, NY 10001

Dear Ed:

Enclosed is a copy of the ad on Ethiopian Relief I told you about.

If Macy's could make a donation I would be grateful.

It was lovely being with you. Have a happy journey and year. Love
to Myra and the kids.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Encl.

December 31, 1984

Dear Harriette:

It was good having you share in the festivities of our annual Hanukah party and, of course, the special tribute to Mary Jordan this year. You are looking well and I do hope your foot problem will soon be completely healed and a thing of the past.

Your gift to the UAHC Ethiopian Relief Fund is truly appreciated, it bespeaks your care and concern for humanity and those less fortunate than yourself. Many thanks.

Best wishes for a healthy, happy and wonderful New Year.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Ms. Harriette Handler
391 Moshulu Parkway
Bronx, NY 10467

ET

December 31, 1984

Mr. Peter Jackson
555 W. Beech Street
Suite 210
San Diego, CA 92104

Dear Peter:

Forgive me for not responding sooner to your letter of December 5 but I've been on the merry-go-round' since then, travelling to and fro all over the land.

I appreciate your explanatory letter and I'm sorry that a misunderstanding arose between us. But, all is well that ends well, is it not?

Regards.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

bc: Mrs. Alexander M. Schindler

On file

555 W. Beech Street, Suite 210
San Diego, California 92101

Phoe

Did you answer

December 5, 1984

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Alex,

Thank you for your letter which I received this morning. I very much regret that we appear to have antagonized one another during our telephone conversation. I have heard so much about you from Michael and Anita that I very much want to make amends, put the record straight and hope that our future communications can be more cordial.

Firstly, let me say that I was concerned that you should be involved in this discussion so late at night. However, the call was not mine, like yourself, I was drawn into the conversation between our good wives; I believe Mrs. Shindler made the call.

At the time of the call, I only knew of you in connection with Ram Carmi. I did not to begin with know that you are the President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. I am well aware of the long term interest of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and I do believe that during our conversation I did compliment you on the excellent work that had been undertaken by your colleagues and in particular, Mr. Glen Stein.

Whilst I am a Board member of the American Association For Ethiopian Jews and both approve and admire the work carried out by this organization, my interest in Ethiopia is through my membership of the Falasha Welfare Association of Great Britain. Our Board includes our Chief Rabbi, David Kessler, the proprietor of the Jewish Chronicle and Ansel Harris, Director of Oxfam. Similarly to the A.A.E.J., our efforts on behalf of Ethiopian Jewry have stretched over a period of some seven years. During this time of heavy, daily commitment, it has often appeared to us that no other Jewish organizations would interest themselves in our desperate cause. During that period, I have made several visits to Africa and through lack of sufficient resources witnessed many newly made African friends perish. Forgive me if my observation on the lack of support that could have saved these people seemed to you to be self righteous. However, I do believe that a detailed study into the recent history of this situation would show that very little assistance has ever been given to Ethiopian Jews in Ethiopia. Similarly, until November 1983 I am not aware of any assistance given to Falashas living in Sudan other than by the A.A.E.J.

However, all this is now history. We are all proud to witness the heroic rescue of Falashas from Sudan by Israel. Many organizations are now raising funds for the Falashas and I am sure that much needed help will reach them shortly.

When I next visit New York I shall endeavor to make an appointment in order that we might meet and discuss this matter more fully. In the meantime, should your travels take you to San Diego or to London you and Mrs. Schindler would be a very welcome guest at our home and both Elizabeth and myself look forward to the pleasure of meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

PETER JACKSON



gy

Edie Miller

12/30/84

Fred Cohen

UAHC ETHIOPIAN RELIEF

Enclosed herewith is a check for \$150. from Miss Frayda Ingber,
170 West End Avenue, New York, NY 10023. This represents a
gift to the famine fund in honor of her colleagues on the staff
of HUC-JIR.



non-Jew works for Jewish organization --- ad is her vision of Jewish community concern for others --- check sent in memory of her late husband on anniversary of his 39th birthday....

December 27, 1984

Ms. Toni Lobue Cabat
134 Pleasantville Road
Pleasantville, NY 10570

Dear Ms. Cabat:

Many thanks for your gracious gift to the UAHC Ethiopian Relief Appeal. We are receiving an overwhelming response from the American community to this humanitarian plea.

I am grateful for your words of commendation, even as I thank you for honoring the memory of your late husband in so very meaningful a manner.

With heartfelt gratitude and every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Chapman

December 27, 1984

Religious School Students
Temple Beth Or
5315 Creedmor Road
Raleigh, NC 27612

Bhalom:

It was wonderful to learn of your loving gift of your October, November and December Tzedakah collection for the UAHC Ethiopian Relief effort. For all of us of the Union we write to express heartfelt appreciation for your care and concern.

Your gift will help us to help provide food and shelter for the homeless, hungry people of Ethiopia. We are truly grateful.

With all good wishes and kindest greetings to one and all, we are

Sincerely,

Charles J. Rothschild, Jr.
Chairman of the Board

Alexander M. Schindler, Rabbi
President

TEMPLE BETH OR RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

5315 CREEDMOOR RD.
RALEIGH, NC 27612

2225

Dec. 21 1984 66-30
531

PAY TO THE
ORDER OF

UAHC - Ethiopia

\$ 226.00

Two hundred and twenty-six dollars and ⁷/₁₀₀ DOLLARS

FIRST CITIZENS BANK

First Citizens Bank & Trust Company
Raleigh, N.C. 27602

FOR

Rebecca S. Hoffman

⑈00002225⑈ >⑈053100300⑈0861302692⑈

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Dear Mr. Rothschild and Rabbi Schindler:
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021

Yes, I want to help.

- 1/ Here is our check for \$ 226.00 to fight famine in Ethiopia and to establish a tent village to shelter the people of Ethiopia who are in need.
- 2/ Here is our check for \$ _____ to assist PROJECT REAP, which is the UAHC program of medical aid specifically for Ethiopian Jews.
(Make check out to UAHC PROJECT REAP)
- 3/ Please call me about volunteering my own services or suggesting some other persons with medical background or access to medical equipment.

* Name Temple Beth OR Religious School Congregation Temple Beth OR
Address 5315 Creedmoor City/Town RAleigh, NC 27612
City, State, Zip RAleigh, N.C. 27612 Personal telephone _____

* The children wanted to give October's, November's and December's tzedakah money to Ethiopia (\$15.00)

Henry R. Schindler

December 26, 1984

Mr. Hirsch Wartik
141 East 33rd Street
New York, NY 10016

Dear Hirsbh:

Dick Cohen gave me your address so that I could thank you for the magnificent layout of the Ethiopian Hunger Ad which you created for the UAHC. All of us are deeply grateful to you. The deeply moving drawing which was used to illustrate the ad is magnificent in its simplicity. All of us of the Union thank you for sharing of your creativity in so generous a manner.

With kindest greetings, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

FROM: Richard Cohen

Dec. 20, 1984

TO: 1. Alex 5. _____
2. _____ 6. _____
3. _____ 7. _____
4. _____ 8. _____

Remarks:

(and send me a copy)

Please write a warm letter of thanks to Mr. Hirsch Wartik

141 East 33rd St.,
New York, NY 10016

Please return ()
Your action ()
Your files ()
For your info ()
Let's discuss ()

for his beautiful layout of the Ethiopian
hunger ad, his deeply moving drawing that we used as an illustration
and his generosity in doing it pro bono.



2131 ELMWOOD AVENUE

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14618

244-7060

THE RABBI'S STUDY

December 20, 1984

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Alex:

I saw this very moving advertisement in the New York Times. But I also saw articles about "Operation Moses", a UJA project to bring "Falasha", Ethiopian Jews out of camps in the Sudan. Which project is the one we should support? My congregants are confused. So am I.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Judea B. Miller

JBM:nk
cc: David Saperstein

Ethiopian Relief

December 26, 1984

Rabbi Judea B. Miller
Temple B'rith Kodesh
2131 Elmwood Avenue
Rochester, NY 14618

Dear Judea:

Thank you for your kind words of appreciation for the advertisement which we placed in the New York Times for Ethiopian Relief. We are getting a superb response to this humanitarian effort.

I understand there has been some confusion in regard to the various efforts which revolve about the situation in Ethiopia. Let me try to clarify :

1/ UAHC Ethiopian Relief is a request for funds which will be used for the tens of thousands of Ethiopian families who are searching for sustenance. They have left their homes because of the famine and are in desperate straits.

2/ UAHC Project REAP is our program seeking assistance for Ethiopian Jews. They require medical help and other assistance.

The enclosed Social Action mailing on FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA will give you additional information on the programs.

3/ OPERATION MOSES is a UJA project seeking to raise funds to bring the Jews out of Ethiopia and resettle them in Israel.

One would have to be a Solomon to determine "which project is the one we should support." All are worthy. All are important. Funds should be given to all of these efforts and we should all give to the very best of our ability.

I hope this has clarified the issue.

With warm regards and all good wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Encl.

cc David S

Light one candle, save one life. A Jewish response to the famine in Ethiopia.



In flight from famine, tens of thousands of Ethiopian families have left their homes in a desperate search for sustenance. By day they sit in the blazing African sun. At night they huddle together for warmth under the open sky.

Millions of men and women around the world have been moved to help.

Now there is a visible Jewish presence in confronting the catastrophic starvation in Ethiopia. It is based on the Talmud: To save one life is to save the world.

It began in Jerusalem, where a private citizen, Abie Nathan, raised \$100,000 in a single night to buy tents and medicine for Ethiopian famine victims. It continues in America, where the movement of Reform Judaism has pledged to support this initiative and help build a complete tent city: 600 tents plus tons of medical supplies and equipment for 6,000 homeless in Ethiopia.

'From Jerusalem With Love'

The first tents and medical supplies are being flown into Ethiopia this month, during the Chanukah holiday. Each tent is imprinted with the legend, "From Jerusalem With Love." Each bears the Star of David, symbol of the Jewish people. A team of volunteer Israeli physicians is providing medical care.

Food has been contributed by many governments, religious groups and voluntary agencies, including the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which is providing emergency clothing supplies and meeting urgent medical needs.

Saving lives is the ultimate *mitzvah* in the Jewish tradition. Our answer to the horror of massive famine in Ethiopia cannot be to turn aside or look away. In this season of Chanukah, when Jews traditionally exchange gifts with their loved ones, let us light an extra candle and give an extra gift.

This will be the most precious gift of all—the gift of life.

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
UAHC Ethiopian Relief
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021

I want to help the victims of starvation in Ethiopia by contributing this check for:

\$360 \$180 \$90 \$72 \$36 \$18 Other _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

(Please make checks payable to UAHC Ethiopian Relief. Your gift is tax deductible.)

This appeal has been initiated by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, composed of 770 Reform synagogues in the United States and Canada. It is addressed to every member of the Jewish community—Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, unaffiliated. We invite as well all other persons who wish to share in this effort to provide emergency shelter and medical care for the victims of famine in Ethiopia.

N.Y. Times
Dec. 16
1984

Efforts underway to rescue, help resettle Ethiopian Jews

By MICHAEL BERENBAUM

WASHINGTON—The rescue of a substantial number of Ethiopian Jews is under way, it appears from interviews with government officials, Jewish professionals and activists on behalf of Ethiopian Jewry.

Sources in United Jewish Appeal who refused to be identified by name suggest that the United Jewish Appeal has made a decision to launch a special fundraising campaign for the rescue and resettlement of Ethiopian Jewry. The figure mentioned is \$60 million.

Travelers just returning from Israel estimate the average age of the rescued Jews as 14. Many of them are small children, and they arrive in rags, without baggage. "They are frail, very thin, but their stomachs are not distended," one traveler said. "Their arms and legs are like sticks. But they are a regal people. Many of them never walked down steps. They have to be taught how to negotiate them."

U.S. government officials indicate that this country will pay a significant share of the transportation and medical expenses involved in the resettlement efforts.

The UJA cabinet has been meeting to determine the size of the campaign and its relationship to other fundraising drives on behalf of Israel. Current plans project that the cost of the rescue and resettlement project will exceed \$100 million.

Economic Austerity in Israel

The resettlement project has begun at a time of economic austerity in Israel. Wage and price controls have been imposed, the government has cut its budget by \$1.5 billion, subsidies have been drastically reduced, and, for the first time in recent years, there is a specter of large-scale unemployment. The responsibility of American Jewry looms large in this rescue effort.

Israeli officials have expressed concern with the magnitude

Michael Berenbaum is opinion page editor of the Washington Jewish Week, where this article is appearing simultaneously.

of the problem of resettling educationally deprived and unskilled immigrants. One Israeli suggested that the country may have to return to the *maabarot* of the 1950s, which will nevertheless appear as palaces to Ethiopian villagers. Nevertheless, Israelis are certain that Ethiopian resettlement will be "a proud chapter in the history of our people."

Citing "the extreme sensitivity of officialdom in the area," officials stressed the need for secrecy until the operation is completed. They specifically asked that the names of the countries involved and the numbers of Jews now reaching Israel not be published.

In the past, the Israeli government has been accused of dragging its feet. Activists on behalf of Ethiopian Jewry now express satisfaction with the scale of the rescue effort.

Catastrophe of Biblical Proportions

What seemed to have brought about this sudden immigration is the drought which has devastated Ethiopia.

According to Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-Queens), who returned from Ethiopia this past weekend, more than 300,000 Ethiopians have starved to death and the number may reach millions. "It's a catastrophe of monumental, biblical proportions," he said. "It seems like the forces of nature have conspired to wreak havoc on the lives of the people."

Efforts to alleviate mass starvation are now under way. Last week, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee had received permission to operate feeding stations in the Gonder, the home of most of the surviving Ethiopian Jews. One official said that Joint may feed as many as 400,000 people.

Previously, the Joint, which is the American Jewish community's counterpart to Protestant and Catholic relief agencies, was denied permission to work in the region.

Israel has launched a national drive to help the victims of the Ethiopian drought.

Protest Community Insensitivity

During the past month, protests on behalf of Ethiopian Jewry disrupted the opening meeting of the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations in Toronto. American



More Haishan youngsters will be joining this Ethiopian youth in Israel if the current rescue effort is successful.

Association for Ethiopian Jewry leaders had charged that the "established community was insensitive to the problem." Shoshana Cardin, the incoming president of CJF, responded, "We are doing everything we can without jeopardizing anyone." Ethiopian Jewry has been a subject of great controversy within recent years, with disputes between the established Jewish community and the AAJ activists erupting over the scope of the Ethiopian Jewry problem and the seriousness of the Israeli rescue efforts.

Recent reports had indicated that more than 12,000 Jews had left their home and were being housed and fed in unsanitary refugee camps. According to one AAJ official more than 2,000 Jews have died. This figure was denied by an American official, who claimed that the number was "a couple of hundred" who were victims of primitive conditions.

UJA's special fundraising campaign of Ethiopian Jewry will be the second special effort—in addition to the regular campaign—in the past three years. In the aftermath of the Lebanon war, UJA launched a special fundraising campaign which fell significantly short of its projected target.

UJA officials look forward to the Ethiopian campaign. "It's very seldom that you have a chance to be a modern-day Moses and save a people," one of them said. □

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MONEY MARKET

Average Rates for Tues., Dec. 4, 1984

Interest Rates	%
180-day Eurodollar C.D. (Jumbo):	10.00
180-day New York C.D. (Jumbo):	10.00
Prime Rate:	11.50
Money Market Acct. (Eff. yield):	9.38
Super N.O.W. Account:	6.50

Foreign Exchange for U.S. \$1

Israel Sheqel:	590.50
Deutsche Mark:	3.0915
Swiss Franc:	2.5485
Canadian Dollar:	1.3228
Japanese Yen:	246.95
British Pound (£1):	\$1.2015
Gold: \$332.00/oz. (second London fixing)	
Silver: \$7.11/oz.	

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MEMBER FDIC **UMB BANK** and Trust Company
Subsidiary of United Mizrahi Bank Ltd.
Closed on all Jewish Holidays
Rates are for informational purposes only. Not responsible for typographical errors.

December 21, 1984

Mrs. Herta Paulsen
49 Maplewood Drive
Amherst, MA 01002

Dear Mrs. Paulsen:

Thank you for your gracious contribution to our Ethiopian Relief
Campaign.

I tend to doubt that we are related. There are two Schindler
branches - one from East Prussia to Hamburg and Berlin, the
other from Galicia to Vienna and Bavaria. You appear to stem
from the former while I am from the latter. But then, all Jews
are related, are they not?

I hope we will have a chance to meet one of these days. Again,
my thanks for your kind contribution.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Her maiden
name is
Schindler

MRS. HERTA PAULSEN
49 MAPLEWOOD DRIVE
AMHERST, MASS. 01002

Dec 17, 1984

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

I have always wondered
whether we were related I know
where since there are not that
many Jewish Schindlers. I
grew up in Hamburg; my grand-
father moved from Berlin
early in the century but had
brothers & sisters in Austria.

With best wishes

Edin

She paid
\$50
for Edin.

Herta Paulsen

Turn

Tend to double it.

There were 2 Shindler
brandies - - one from Rost Prussia
to Hamburg & Berlin the other from
Galicia to Vienna & Bavaria. You
appear to hold from the former which
I am from the latter. But then,
all Jews are related, are they not.

Hope we'll have a chance
to meet one of these days.
Thanks for check etc

1/4/47

December 19, 1984

Mr. and Mrs. Alan I. Karten
9620 S. W. 60th Court
Miami, FL 33156

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Karten:

This is to acknowledge with heartfelt appreciation your generous gift of \$400. to the UAHC Ethiopian Relief Fund. We are grateful for your help in seeking to alleviate the great suffering being endured by the people of Ethiopia.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Edith J. Miller

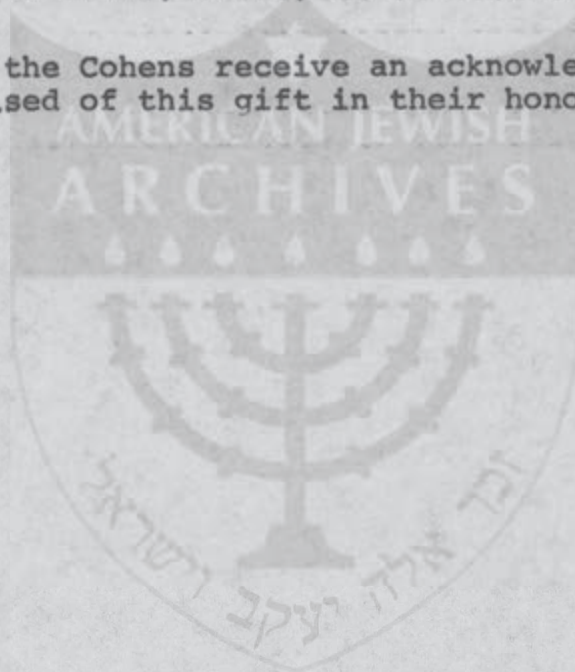
December 7, 1984

Al Vorspan/Ruth Harrison

UAHC ETHIOPIAN RELIEF

Enclosed is my check for \$400. payable to UAHC Ethiopian Relief. It is a contribution from Bernard and Deborah Cohen (Mr. and Mrs.) of 9530 W. W. 95th Court, Miami, Florida 33176 and represents a Hanukah gift in honor of Alan and Donna (Mr. and Mrs.) Alan Karten of 9620 S. W. 60th Court, Miami, Florida 33156.

Please see that the Cohens receive an acknowledgement and that the Kartens are advised of this gift in their honor. Many thanks.



December 12, 1984

Mr. & Mrs. Alan Karten
9620 S. W. 60th Court
Miami, Florida 33156

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Karten:

You will be happy and touched to know that a contribution was made in your honor - as a Chanukah gift - to UAHC Ethiopian Relief by Bernard and Deborah Cohen.

We want to express our profound appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Cohen (in this letter) for their efforts to alleviate suffering in Ethiopia. And I am sure you will agree that there can be no finer gift for Chanukah.

I am attaching the latest about the Abie Nathan tent village, which these funds will help to create and sustain.

Sincerely,

Albert Vorspan

AV:rh
encl.
cc: Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Cohen
bcc: Edith Miller

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

December 18, 1984

Albert Vorspan

cc: Charles J. Rothschild, Jr.

Just a note to let you know that Abdd~~u~~ Mohamed of the Ethiopian Mission called me up to thank us in behalf of the Government for our ad and the help in which we ar~~e~~ extending to the Ethiopian people.



Edith J. Miller

December 17, 1984

Ruth Harrison

Enclosed herewith for Ethiopian Emergency Food Drive a check for \$125.- from Temple Beth-El, Cape Coral, Florida and \$750.- from The Congregation Beth Israel in West Hartford, Connecticut.

Inasmuch as they came with special letters to Rabbi Schindler, we will thank them from this office.



Edith J. Miller

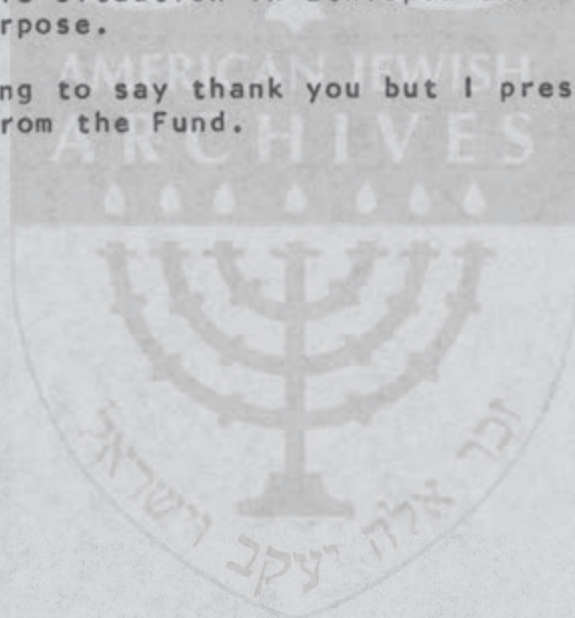
✓
December 13, 1984

Al Vorspan

ETHIOPIAN RELIEF

Enclosed is a check payable to the UAHC in the sum of \$1,000. from Louis E. Wolfson, P.O. Box 4, Jacksonville, FL 32201. He notes in his letter to Alex that he learned the UAHC is raising funds for the tragic situation in Ethiopia and his gift is to be used for the purpose.

Alex will be writing to say thank you but I presume there is also a thank you from the Fund.



Ethiop

December 12, 1984

Ms. Marjerie Grossbarth
President
Temple Sh'arey Shalom
78 So. Springfield Avenue
Springfield, NJ 07081

Dear Ms. Grossbarth:

The enclosed copy of a memo which is being mailed to the personnel noted, is self-explanatory. In addition, copies of the UNION Resolution on Ethiopian Relief are being sent to temple presidents in the regular packets which go forth from the UAHC House of Living Judaism.

We have been involved in working in behalf of the Jews of Ethiopia for quite a long time. Some of our efforts have been in concert with other organizations so our role is not always highlighted, but we have kept the leaders of our movement and our congregations informed of all activities.

I trust you saw the story which was carried in the New York Times yesterday. God willing, within a very brief time frame all of the remaining Jews of Ethiopia will reach Israel.

With appreciation for your concern and assurance that your Union is doing everything possible in regard to the Jews as well as those Ethiopians who are suffering from the dreadful famine, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



78 So. Springfield Avenue

Springfield, New Jersey 07081

(201) 379-5387

Rabbi
JOSHUA GOLDSTEIN

Cantor
IRVING KRAMERMAN

Educational Director
ELAINE SNEPAR

Music Director
RON BROWN

December 5, 1984

Rabbi Alexander Shindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Rabbi Shindler,

We, the Board of Trustees and members of Temple Sha'arey Shalom, Springfield, New Jersey, are most concerned about the plight of the Ethiopian Jews.

please utilize the resources of your good office to assist these beleaguered people to attain their goal of immigration to the State of Israel. We hope that you will do all in your power for humanitarian reasons.

Thank you for your assistance in this urgent matter.

Sincerely yours,

Marjorie Grossbarth
President

MG:rh

FROM:

Mrs. Virginia S. Brill
2900 Wakefield Way
Columbus, Georgia 31906

December 12, 1984

DATE:

ATTENTION:

TO:

Rabbi Alexander Schindler

SUBJECT:

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

MESSAGE

Please advise me when the drive for the Ethiopians will begin. It would

be a relevant project for our Religious School. As we begin to collect funds we need to know the title of the project so that we can send the Tzedakah to the correct fund. Also it would be helpful to have some written information so that the children will feel a part of this undertaking. Thank you for your help. The tent city idea is very exciting.

Administrator, Temple Israel Religious School

SIGNED:

Virginia S. Brill

REPLY

Enclosed herewith is a copy of the memo going forward this week to those designated, your rabbi may have received it by now. In any event, funds for the victims of the famine in Ethiopia can be sent here with a notation for UAHC ETHIOPIAN RELIEF and FUNDS FOR THE Jews of Ethiopia can be designated for UAHC PROJECT REAP. Many thanks for your inquiry and your concern.

DATE:

12/14/84

SIGNED: Assistant to the President

East Miller



Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

To: Rabbis, Social Action Chairs, Commission on Social Action, OCAR Committee on Justice and Peace, CRCs

From: Charles J. Rothschild, Jr., Chairman of the UAHC Board of Trustees
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President of the UAHC

Date: December 10, 1984

Subject: FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA

An extraordinary Jewish response to the calamitous famine in Ethiopia is now unfolding....a tent village is being planned which will be erected near a feeding station in drought-stricken Ethiopia with funds raised from the Jewish public in Israel and the United States. Conceived and inspired by Abie Nathan, famed Israeli humanitarian, the village will be served by doctors and medical personnel who have already volunteered in Israel. They will be augmented by doctors, nurses and others who will be asked to serve from the United States. The tents will be flown in from Israel and will be marked "FROM JERUSALEM WITH LOVE" and will be stamped with a Shield of David.

The UAHC, through its Board of Trustees, has resolved to participate in this uniquely Jewish undertaking (resolution attached). We have pledged to raise a minimum of \$100,000 toward the goal of \$300,000 needed to establish a model village of 600 tents to shelter 6,000 people. Since these funds may not be drawn from the UAHC budget, we turn to individuals within and outside our movement, for whom the saving of human life is the ultimate *MITZVAH*.

We urge you to:

- 1) Publish this letter in your temple bulletin or reproduce it and send it to your congregants;
- 2) It would be most helpful and effective if the rabbi would preach on this project, preferably on *Shabbat Chanukah*;
- 3) Utilize the holiday of *Chanukah* as an occasion for concerned Jews to make a gift of life by writing a check to UAHC ETHIOPIAN RELIEF; and/or
- 4) Ask the children of the religious school to undertake a special *Keren Ami* project to save the children of Ethiopia.

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Administrative Secretary
Theodore K. Broido

ETHIOPIA RELIEF

Saving human lives is the ultimate mitzvah in the Jewish tradition. Therefore, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations has followed with a deepening sense of horror and alarm the reports of massive famine in Ethiopia and elsewhere in Africa.

Accordingly, the Board of Trustees of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, meeting in Bal Harbour, Florida, on December 2, 1984:

1/ Expresses its profound gratitude for the moral audacity of Abie Nathan, Israeli humanitarian, in seeking to establish a visible Jewish presence in Ethiopia by creating a tent village in which Ethiopians will be sheltered and nurtured by doctors and medical personnel who volunteer within Israel and the American Jewish community;

2/ Pledges its active support for this imperative initiative by undertaking to raise at least \$100,000 from concerned individuals within our community and the Jewish public at large. These funds will be added to those already raised by the Israeli public.

While mobilizing our movement on behalf of this urgent universal challenge of feeding the hungry, we will, of course, continue our own UAHC efforts to meet the particular needs of the historic Jewish community of Ethiopia. Accordingly, the Board of Trustees of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations:

3/ Commends the Commission on Social Action for the establishment of PROJECT REAP, which is the Reform movement's Ethiopian Jewry assistance program. The first group of doctors under this project has just returned from Ethiopia, having provided needed spot medical care in the Jewish villages and having distributed hundreds of pounds of medical equipment. The Board of the Union expresses its appreciation and commendation to Drs. Joseph Schuster and Jonathan Ostrow, both of Seattle, Washington. Additional trips of doctors are now being organized and will be continued until the crisis is resolved. Medical personnel for this purpose will continue to be encouraged to volunteer, and congregations will continue to be called upon to contribute financially to make this effort possible.

These tent cities are needed because hundreds of thousands have fled their villages in search of food at the feeding stations. These stations do not have the facilities to provide shelter for the people who are left to the forces of nature. This has made a terrible situation worse. Mr. Nathan's plan is to build the tent cities by making use of Israeli tents, blankets, field kitchens and field hospitals. He believes that if one model city can be built, then the various relief organizations operating in Ethiopia will pick up on the idea and arrange independently for additional tent cities. He has raised over \$100,000 from donations in Israel alone and is asking for American Jews to help him raise the balance. Please let people know that this uniquely Jewish effort is available for their support. Checks should be made payable to UAHC ETHIOPIAN RELIEF and sent to 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021.

While marshalling energies for this great universal effort, we also are continuing our particular efforts for Ethiopian Jews. As part of PROJECT REAP (Reform Movement's Ethiopian Jewry Assistance Program), we recently sent two doctors for a two-week mission to provide on the spot medical care in the Jewish villages. Dr. Joseph Schuster (the social action chair for the UAHC Pacific Northwest Council) and Dr. Jonathan Ostrow, internist from Seattle, returned to the States early this month and are available, as their schedules permit, for speaking engagements.

We are now planning future trips of doctors to leave for Ethiopia. If you know of medical personnel who might be interested in participating in this program, please contact Glen Stein, at the Religious Action Center, 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D. C. 20036 (202/ 387-2800). The expenses for these trips are paid out of the \$200 congregations contribute as they join the REAP program. Please encourage your congregation to join in this effort as well.

Dear Mr. Rothschild and Rabbi Schindler:
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021

Yes, I want to help.

- 1/ Here is our check for \$ _____ to fight famine in Ethiopia and to establish a tent village to shelter the people of Ethiopia who are in need.
- 2/ Here is our check for \$ _____ to assist PROJECT REAP, which is the UAHC program of medical aid specifically for Ethiopian Jews.
(Make check out to UAHC PROJECT REAP)
- 3/ Please call me about volunteering my own services or suggesting some other persons with medical background or access to medical equipment.

Name _____ Congregation _____
Address _____ City/Town _____
City, State, Zip _____ Personal telephone _____

Light one candle, save one life. A Jewish response to the famine in Ethiopia.



In flight from famine, tens of thousands of Ethiopian families have left their homes in a desperate search for sustenance. By day they sit in the blazing African sun. At night they huddle together for warmth under the open sky.

Millions of men and women around the world have been moved to help.

Now there is a visible Jewish presence in confronting the catastrophic starvation in Ethiopia. It is based on the Talmud: To save one life is to save the world.

It began in Jerusalem, where a private citizen, Abie Nathan, raised \$100,000 in a single night to buy tents and medicine for Ethiopian famine victims. It continues in America, where the movement of Reform Judaism has pledged to support this initiative and help build a complete tent city: 600 tents plus tons of medical supplies and equipment for 6,000 homeless in Ethiopia.

'From Jerusalem With Love'

The first tents and medical supplies are being flown into Ethiopia this month, during the Chanukah holiday. Each tent is imprinted with the legend, "From Jerusalem With Love." Each bears the Star of David, symbol of the Jewish people. A team of volunteer Israeli physicians is providing medical care.

Food has been contributed by many governments, religious groups and voluntary agencies, including the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which is providing emergency clothing supplies and meeting urgent medical needs.

Saving lives is the ultimate *mitzvah* in the Jewish tradition. Our answer to the horror of massive famine in Ethiopia cannot be to turn aside or look away. In this season of Chanukah, when Jews traditionally exchange gifts with their loved ones, let us light an extra candle and give an extra gift.

This will be the most precious gift of all—the gift of life.

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
UAHC Ethiopian Relief
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021

I want to help the victims of starvation in Ethiopia by contributing this check for:

\$360 \$180 \$90 \$72 \$36 \$18 Other_____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

(Please make checks payable to UAHC Ethiopian Relief. Your gift is tax deductible.)

This appeal has been initiated by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, composed of 770 Reform synagogues in the United States and Canada. It is addressed to every member of the Jewish community—Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, unaffiliated. We invite as well all other persons who wish to share in this effort to provide emergency shelter and medical care for the victims of famine in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

May 9, 1984

Albert Vorspan

Enclosed is the letter on Ethiopian Jewry which you were to transmit to Abe Bayer. Thanks for taking care of this matter.



May 9, 1984

Professor Elliott Levine
Winnipeg Committee for
Ethiopian Jews
893 Kingston Crescent
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2M 0T7 Canada

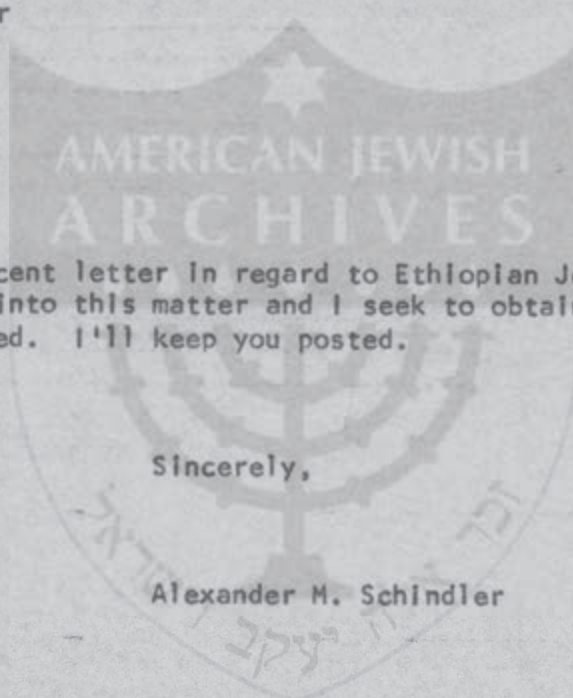
Dear Elliott:

Thank you for your recent letter in regard to Ethiopian Jewry. Be assured I am looking into this matter and I seek to obtain a response to the issue you raised. I'll keep you posted.

Warm regards,

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



Winnipeg Committee for Ethiopian Jews

~~245 Stafford St., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 2K4~~ 393 Kingston Cres.
Telephone: (204) ~~489-2352~~, 233-6516, or 786-7811 (ext. 248) WAG. C.M.A.
R2M OT7

April 27th 1984

RABBI Alexander M. Schindler, President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

I write with some urgency.

Last month I recall indicating in conversation that 7,000 "falashas" had reportedly left Gondar region with 2,800 confirmed in Sudan.

Chairman

Prof. Elliott Levine

Members

Donald Aronovitch
Marcia Cogan
Martin Levin
David Matas
Rabbi Neal Rose
Harry Schachter
Philip Schachter
Joseph Sector

Dozens of letters and two telex's indicate that a least 3,500 (with possibly 6-7000) have got thru. These are largely family groups that took longer in transit than usual. Baruch Tegegne's sister & two children arrived in Montreal on JIAS sponsorship from Addis last week, she continues to report that no more than 3,000 remain virtually all of these the old & the young the able bodied have left.

While full confirmation remains, the residual secondary route run by Israel (204 rescued this past month) is clearly inadequate to the task—a 2-3yr transit time will see too many perish. The present gov't appears to desire no "complications" prior elections, the prospects of a labor win are—given their history/constituency on this issue—chilling.

(It is but 4 mo. since 25,000 officially remained in Gondar, 2 mo. since the revision down to 17,000, clearly a qualitative shift demanding new initiative is occurring. Of course Israel should be given every credit for a credible job last Oct-Feb given the numbers available to be rescued and actually rescued at the time. This exemplary effort (that eventually cost one, and possibly two, agents) now no longer in place, & the best ever, would not be adequate to the current need!)

It thus appears that Israeli assurances re:appropriate prompt action to clear the Sudan must now be vigorously "called in". While ambassadors are not always briefed, Mossad intelligence is at least as current as mine (often sources are identical). Given the magnitude of the problem it now seems time that the political will be mustered to act...a 24 hr military operation to clear the Sudan is logistically possible. With the Gondar Exodus completed this option should, I believe, be urged. I pray that you will join in counselling effective action at this time to the highest authorities.

With warm regards,

Elliott Levine

P.S. over

"As you save a single soul, you redeem the world." — Hillel

Investigation of current B'nai B'rith
campaign (re: "situation in hand" - no anti-
Semitism, no problems etc.) regrettably shows
it to be pre-election Herut hype.
S.L.



Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

To: Rabbis, Social Action Chairs, Commission on Social Action, CCAR Committee on Justice and Peace, CRCs

From: Charles J. Rothschild, Jr., Chairman of the UAHC Board of Trustees
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President of the UAHC

Date: December 10, 1984

Subject: FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA

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(Make check out to UAHC PROJECT REAP)
- 3/ Please call me about volunteering my own services or suggesting some other persons with medical background or access to medical equipment.

Name _____ Congregation _____
Address _____ City/Town _____
City, State, Zip _____ Personal telephone _____

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National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council

443 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016

(212) 684-6950

May 28, 1984

Mr. Albert Vorspan, Vice President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Al:

As per your request of May 11, here are my reactions to the urgent communication of Prof. Elliot Levine of Canada to Alex Schindler. Indeed, as Levine suggests, a qualitative and quantitative series of shifts have taken place in the situation of Ethiopian Jews in the last six months, but not in the sequence indicated nor with regard to the numbers of arrivals quoted. Here is the situation as we see it:

1. At the beginning of the year, the refugee camps were almost totally cleared of Ethiopian Jews who were brought to Israel by the Israeli unit responsible for rescue.
2. Soon afterwards, the ongoing hostilities of various nationalist and irredentist revolutionary groups intensified so that the central-government control almost collapsed, especially in the areas of the large Jewish villages in the Gondar. Jews and others began to flow across the borders again in large numbers, and by April, the Jewish population in the camps had doubled. It has now almost tripled (about 6,000 may be there).
3. Israeli units responded concurrently, bringing large groups to Israel for several weeks. NJCRAC has been monitoring this situation closely and is continually updating Jewish leadership (see attached NJCRAC mailing).

Prof. Levine's numbers are inaccurate. The amount he quotes for April isn't even half the actual number brought to Israel. The numbers he gives for those left in Ethiopia are also incorrect; there are much fewer than he indicates. The kind of operation Levine asks for was probably in place a long time ago. They have been doing everything possible for some years now.

4. Today, all the political parties know clearly of the strong desire of both Israel and world Jewry that rescue continue and increase as rapidly as possible. The Israeli "elections", as Prof. Levine puts it, are not restraining factors, and to suggest politics is to say that Israel acts only under pressure and must continue to be pressured--a line which we reject.
5. The moral and political "will to act" doesn't need to be mustered. The will to rescue all Ethiopian Jews has been proven by the

NJCRAC CONSTITUENT ORGANIZATIONS

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American Jewish Committee
American Jewish Congress
B'nai B'rith—Anti-Defamation League
Hadassah
Jewish Labor Committee
Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.

National Council of Jewish Women
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America
United Synagogue of America—National Women's
League for Conservative Judaism
Women's American ORT

Local, State and County Agencies* and their Locations

ALABAMA

BIRMINGHAM JCC

ARIZONA

GREATER PHOENIX Jewish Federation
TUCSON Anti-Defamation-CRC of the JCC

CALIFORNIA

GREATER LONG BEACH AND WEST ORANGE COUNTY Jewish Community Federation
LOS ANGELES CRC of Jewish Federation-Council
OAKLAND Greater East Bay JCRC
ORANGE COUNTY Jewish Federation
SACRAMENTO JCRC
SAN DIEGO CRC of United Jewish Federation
SAN FRANCISCO JCRC
GREATER SAN JOSE JCRC

CONNECTICUT

GREATER BRIDGEPORT Jewish Federation
GREATER DANBURY CRC of Jewish Federation
GREATER HARTFORD CRC of Jewish Federation
NEW HAVEN Jewish Federation
EASTERN CONN. Jewish Federation
GREATER NORWALK Jewish Federation
STAMFORD United Jewish Federation
WATERBURY Jewish Federation
JCRC of Connecticut

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON Jewish Federation of Delaware

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

GREATER WASHINGTON JCC

FLORIDA

SOUTH BROWARD Jewish Federation
GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE Jewish Federation
JACKSONVILLE JCC
GREATER MIAMI Jewish Federation
GREATER ORLANDO Jewish Federation
PALM BEACH COUNTY Jewish Federation
PINELLAS COUNTY Jewish Federation
SARASOTA Jewish Federation

GEORGIA

ATLANTA Jewish Federation
SAVANNAH Jewish Council

ILLINOIS

METROPOLITAN CHICAGO Public Affairs Committee of Jewish United Fund
PEORIA Jewish Federation
SPRINGFIELD Jewish Federation

INDIANA

INDIANAPOLIS JCRC
SOUTH BEND Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley
JCRC of Indiana

IOWA

GREATER DES MOINES Jewish Federation

KANSAS

KANSAS CITY, See Missouri

KENTUCKY

LOUISVILLE Jewish Community Federation

LOUISIANA

GREATER NEW ORLEANS Jewish Federation
SHREVEPORT Jewish Federation

MAINE

PORTLAND Southern Maine Jewish Federation-Community Council

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE JCRC
(Montgomery County, see D.C.)

MASSACHUSETTS

METROPOLITAN BOSTON JCC
MARBLEHEAD North Shore Jewish Federation
GREATER NEW BEDFORD Jewish Federation
SPRINGFIELD Jewish Federation
WORCESTER Jewish Federation

MICHIGAN

METROPOLITAN DETROIT JCC
FLINT Jewish Federation

MINNESOTA

MINNEAPOLIS Minnesota and Dakotas JCRC—Anti-Defamation League

MISSOURI

GREATER KANSAS CITY Jewish Community Relations Bureau
ST. LOUIS JCRC

NEBRASKA

OMAHA JCRC Committee of Jewish Federation

NEW JERSEY

ATLANTIC COUNTY Federation of Jewish Agencies
BERGEN COUNTY JCRC of United Jewish Community
CHERRY HILL JCRC of Southern New Jersey Jewish Federation
DELAWARE VALLEY Jewish Federation
EAST ORANGE Metropolitan New Jersey Jewish Community Federation
NORTHERN MIDDLESEX COUNTY Jewish Federation
RARITAN VALLEY Jewish Federation
UNION Central New Jersey Jewish Federation
WAYNE North Jersey Jewish Federation

NEW MEXICO

ALBUQUERQUE JCC

NEW YORK

GREATER ALBANY Jewish Federation
BINGHAMTON Jewish Federation of Broome County
BROOKLYN JCC
GREATER BUFFALO Jewish Federation
ELMIRA CRC of Jewish Welfare Fund
GREATER KINGSTON Jewish Federation
NEW YORK JCRC
ROCHESTER Jewish Community Federation
GREATER SCHENECTADY Jewish Federation
SYRACUSE Jewish Federation
UTICA JCC

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AKRON Jewish Community Federation
CANTON Jewish Community Federation
CINCINNATI JCRC
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TOLEDO CRC of Jewish Welfare Federation
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OKLAHOMA CITY JCC
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PORTLAND Jewish Federation

PENNSYLVANIA

ALLENTOWN CRC of Jewish Federation
ERIE JCC
GREATER PHILADELPHIA JCRC
PITTSBURGH CRC of United Jewish Federation
SCRANTON-LACKAWANNA Jewish Council
GREATER WILKES-BARRE Jewish Federation

RHODE ISLAND

PROVIDENCE CRC of Rhode Island Jewish Federation

SOUTH CAROLINA

CHARLESTON JCRC Committee
COLUMBIA CRC of Jewish Welfare Federation

TENNESSEE

MEMPHIS JCRC
NASHVILLE AND MIDDLE TENNESSEE Jewish Federation

TEXAS

AUSTIN JCC
GREATER DALLAS JCRC of Jewish Federation
EL PASO JCRC Committee
GREATER HOUSTON Jewish Federation
FORT WORTH Jewish Federation
SAN ANTONIO JCRC of Jewish Federation

VIRGINIA

NEWPORT NEWS-HAMPTON Jewish Federation
RICHMOND Jewish Community Federation
TIDEWATER United Jewish Federation
(Northern Virginia, see D.C.)

WASHINGTON

GREATER SEATTLE Jewish Federation

WISCONSIN

MADISON JCC
MILWAUKEE Jewish Council

*Community Relations Committee (CRC); Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC); Jewish Community Council (JCC)

numbers arriving each year since 1979 when they were first found in the refugee camps. 6,500 souls now in Israel is the best evidence.

6. We believe that the "Gondar Exodus" is not over yet. Dedicated and skilled Israelis are working 24 hours a day to keep movement going. However, such a rescue effort, conducted in hostile territory, is not a fine-tuned emigration operation with established quotas, moving in an orderly and legal fashion.
7. Prof. Levine's sources of information are not quite identical to Israel's. Even those coming from the refugee camps, whom Levine is in contact with through the AAEEJ, do not have the total picture. The Israelis have the "geshtalt"--view--the access of a sovereign nation, which is not available to private groups; but 6,500 olim are openly visible.
8. No doubt conditions in the refugee camps are very difficult. How could it be otherwise when the numbers have tripled in such a short period of time? You can imagine what it must mean to collect, sustain, protect, hide and then move such large numbers of people, in the midst of 600,000 non-Jewish refugees who watch as Falashas mysteriously receive better treatment . . . then disappear; so the hostility and erratic movement is understandable.

In the last two weeks, I have met with on-site workers and the new chairperson of the Israel Public Council on Ethiopia. Their reports, in addition to ones received from U.S. Government sources, give one hope for the total redemption of Beta Yisroel in the foreseeable future. With 6,500 already in Israel and 6,000 in the refugee camps, more than half the number of Ethiopian Jews are already out of Ethiopia, of which amount more than 50 percent are actually free in Israel-- an incredible record for the Israelis.

Warmest personal regards,



Abraham J. Bayer
Director, International Commission

AJB:tn
enclosure

*P.S.
If you would like us
to meet with Levine, I'll
be pleased to arrange it.*

May 10, 1984

Mr. Abraham Bayer
N. J. C. R. A. C.
443 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

Dear Abe:

Please give me your comments on the
attached, so Alex can respond positively.

Alex was favorably impressed by this
guy and doesn't want to just finesse the
response.

Thanks for your help.

Cordially,

Albert Vorspan

AV:rh
encl.

MEMORANDUM

From Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

Date May 9, 1984

To Albert Vorspan

Enclosed is the letter on Ethiopian Jewry which you are to transmit to Abe Bayer. Thanks for taking care of this matter.



wrote for Rose
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100



Winnipeg Committee for Ethiopian Jews

~~245 Stafford St., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 2K4~~ 393 Kingston Cres.
Telephone: (204) 489-2352, 233-6516, or 786-7811 (ext. 248) WAG. CHW.
R2M OT7

April 27th 1984

RABBI Alexander M. Schindler, President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

I write with some urgency.

Last month I recall indicating in conversation that 7,000 "falashas" had reportedly left Gondar region with 2,800 confirmed in Sudan.

Chairman

Prof. Elliott Levine

Members

Donald Aronovitch
Marcia Cogan
Martin Levin
David Matas
Rabbi Neal Rose
Harry Schachter
Philip Schachter
Joseph Secter

Dozens of letters and two telex's indicate that a least 3,500 (with possibly 6-7000) have got thru. These are largely family groups that took longer in transit than usual. Baruch Tegegne's sister & two children arrived in Montreal on JIAS sponsorship from Addis last week, she continues to report that no more than 3,000 remain virtually all of these the old & the young the able bodied have left.

While full confirmation remains, the residual secondary route run by Israel (204 rescued this past month) is clearly inadequate to the task—a 2-3yr transit time will see too many perish. The present gov't appears to desire no "complications" prior elections, the prospects of a labor win are given their history/constituency on this issue-chilling.

(It is but 4 mo. since 25,000 officially remained in Gondar, 2 mo. since the revision down to 17,000, clearly a qualitative shift demanding new initiative is occurring. Of course Israel should be given every credit for a credible job last Oct-Feb given the numbers available to be rescued and actually rescued at the time. This exemplary effort (that eventually cost one, and possibly two, agents) now no longer in place, & the best ever, would not be adequate to the current need!)

It thus appears that Israeli assurances re:appropriate prompt action to clear the Sudan must now be vigorously "called in". While ambassadors are not always briefed, Mossad intelligence is at least as current as mine (often sources are identical). Given the magnitude of the problem it now seems time that the political will be mustered to act...a 24 hr military operation to clear the Sudan is logistically possible. With the Gondar Exodus completed this option should, I believe, be urged. I pray that you will join in counselling effective action at this time to the highest authorities.

With warm regards,

Elliott Levine

P.S. over

"As you save a single soul, you redeem the world." — Hillel

May 24, 1984

Professor Elliott Levine
Winnipeg Committee for
Ethiopian Jews
215 Stafford Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 2K1
Canada

Dear Elliott:

I was unable to get back to you by telephone and I thank you for your letter of May 15.

You should know that we have received some very encouraging reports from Israel. Apparently some good things are going on. I'm dashing off for a UAHC program and thus am merely writing to let you know that things are looking better.

I was delighted to learn about your new rabbi and I do hope that it will be a good shidach.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

CC AV.

Winnipeg Committee for Ethiopian Jews

215 Stafford St., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 2K1

Telephone: (204) 489-2352, 233-6516, or 786-7811 (ext. 248)

May 15th. 1984

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, President
U.A.H.C.
838 Fifth Ave
New York N.Y. 10021

Dear Rabbi,

Chairman

Prof. Elliott Levine

Members

Donald Aronovitch
Marcia Cogan
Martin Levin
David Matas
Rabbi Neal Rose
Harry Schachter
Philip Schachter
Joseph Sector

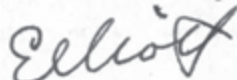
Thank you for your reply of May 9th. If you have not yet been informed I pass on the following. Subsequent to the interdiction of both supply routes for several weeks (coincident with the claim-repeated by B'nai B'rith that only a handful were left) during which time thousands made their exodus, there was reinstitution of the "minor" route. Then 384 children were landed in a single operation (thereby reinstituting the major route) the next week a further 330 were landed, I have not checked this past weeks activities as yet. It seems fair to note that Shamir has given a green light for the ongoing Sudan clearance. At this rate there will need to be a continuous flow for the next 4-5 months...with no reduction due to difficulties raised by: Khaddaffi, rainy season, Israeli elections etc.

The other problems relate to the marginal mobility of those remaining. Funds and etc. are being moved by some to help in the Gondar, medical aid is also in process. I do not believe adequate provision has yet been made for the few thousand- perhaps as few as 3,000 remaining. Mobility for those near Addis is more logistical than "physical condition" related. Both AAEJ and CAEJ have recently been able to obtain exit paper on more reasonable terms. I'd guess we are still looking at dozens and not 100's per month this way. We in Wpg. have recently funded one of these "packages". Full costs may now prove to run closer to \$1,000.

Some here are nervous re labour's committment....I expect there will be politicking in Israel the next month or so re this.

Tracy Klirs will be our new rabbi and there is full hearted support in the cngregation for this venture. I hope she will be able to thrive on the challenge, Neal Rose (a ctte. member, chief of Rabbinic council, and former head of our school, is most enthusiastic and supportive...Tracy has requested him as "mentor" etc. Neal is a mensch so hopefully Tracy will productively settle in.)

Sincerely,



"As you save a single soul, you redeem the world." — Hillel

Zolob

April 11, 1984

Professor Elliott Levine
Winnipeg Committee for
Ethiopian Jews
215 Stafford Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3N 0S1
Canada

Dear Professor Levine:

I, too, am delighted that we had an opportunity to meet. And I thank you for taking the time to write and to share with me the information in regard to my inquiry on the guide fee. This is very helpful and I thank you.

With every good wish for a sweet and beautiful Passover, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

*Ray Craig
Ex-officio*

Winnipeg Committee for Ethiopian Jews

215 Stafford St., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 2K1

Telephone: (204) 487-2352, 233-6516, or 786-7811 (ext. 248)

March 28th, 1984.

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
838-5th Ave.
NYC-NY 10021

Dear Rabbi,

It was a distinct pleasure meeting with you yesterday.

I have made inquiry re: the matter of \$75 guide fee you asked about and can report positively in the matter.

It seems that a variety of options face those embarking on the route, (these include-1-going it alone-2-being guided by a fellow "falasha"-3-accompanying a trader-4-engaging a paid guide..obviously nice if you can afford the equivalent fee of a years wages/income per head!).

The problem as I observed is to identify beforehand a reliable contact/conduit for transfer of funds. If your inquiry concerned Mr. Glen Stein of New Jersey I am informed that he had such reliable contact. If Mr. Stein was not the party referred to, you may wish to contact him..the AAEJ's Chicago office can direct you to him.

My information is that in general some are still being intercepted, thus a guide is a desirable insurance. The Gondar "contact" used by Mr. Stein has proven to be reliable in the past (ie. funds paid him on behalf of specific individuals have subsequently seen those individuals landed safely in Israel), the funds recently moved by Stein have not yet resulted in the confirmed landing in Israel. I note that no one was moved from Sudan to Israel between the group of 410 Feb.6th and the group of 80 reported out last week. With thousands now in the camps final confirmation may reasonably take further time.

I would like to use this opportunity to make two further observations. Over time there is agreement between my data sources and official Israeli counts. Usually there has

/2

"As you save a single soul, you redeem the world." — Hillel

Chairman

Prof. Elliott Levine

Members

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Martin Levin
David Matas
Rabbi Neal Rose
Harry Schachter
Philip Schachter
Joseph Selter

2.

been some delay in the matter of Israeli confirmation of Sudan camp occupants and earlier "falasha" accounts. Non jewish sources in Ethiopia provide confirmation and information etc. by 'phone, these have yet to indicate that the dramatic move cited in a letter from Ethiopia re:same by Pesach has transpired. While Israeli sources indicated perhaps 200 in camps early Feb., it is clear that at least 12 times this number are there now, (with a single Israeli falasha-as yet unconfirmed-source reporting 7,000). Besides the AAEJ my contacts are in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and of course Israel. My information from Ethiopia is thru these other sources.

Implicit in your request for information is indication that contact with, and reliable information about, the beta yisrael is somewhat difficult. While this is true to some degree, it is undoubtedly not as difficult as some Israeli sources indicate. (I note that some Israeli officials have been encouraging me..others are under instruction to block my efforts. Recently I was requested to stop all activities re rescue, especially re the Sudan camp etc. now that Israel had cleared/virtually cleared the camp etc. That is, after Feb.6th the Israelis were ^{once more} requesting abandonment of such efforts as you describe. I attribute no motives to anyone, but note that the flow from Gondar via the only general conduit for 90% of those now in Israel has never been enhanced by an Israeli mission in this regard.) Persistently it has been claimed that individuals could not ID "falashas" etc. This is gross overstatement. The most disquieting story I have heard is perhaps instructive, immediately prior to the Canadian film team arriving at Ghaddarif(Sudan camp), and after over 6 months of total inaction and the deaths of several hundreds, the Mossad informed their local operatives and the falasha community that the film crew were not really Canadian but PLO! Little wonder that Israelis were telling us that it was difficult for north americans to ID falashas! (Of course such subterfuge might be justified..if..there had been a rescue in place. It was solely the 20 corpses of the previous week that led to the desperate gamble to take a chance on the camera crew. Undoubtedly Israel in general is virtuous. But as Emil Fackenheim has pointed out, "it is up to us, to this generation, not to wreck it" not to wreck this chance to heal the world, to redeem our people and the land. This was his motive for his recent aliya.

I apologize for my lack of brevity-an occupational hazard for academic philosophers. Again it was a pleasure meeting with you..if I am a zealot so be it, my reading of redemption, is that this miracle, like miracles in general has little to do with the supranatural and everything to do with free people who will to accomplish the good, however improbable. Success is never guaranteed, however the miracle of success does occur..sometimes. And as Buber has said of dialogue..it is certain not to come to those who do not risk it. We jews who would hear our god dare never forget how to plead, to listen, and to act.

SHALOM

Elliott Levine

Ethiopian Jews

*Anything to
Share with
Leone?*

May 9, 1984

*Call him today
I want to relay rally.*

His Excellency, The Israeli Ambassador
Meir Rosenne
Embassy of Israel
Washington, D.C.

Dear Meir:

We have been telling people who make inquiry regarding Ethiopian Jews that Israel has been doing everything possible for them and with some reasonable effectiveness. Now, I have received the enclosed letter which raises new problems and with some urgency. Therefore, I would appreciate it if you were to tell me how to respond and just what is happening. If you think it necessary, you might transmit this information to your home office, et al.

Warm regards.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

*See
June -
Rosenne +
arrange day
w/ DC
6/12 w/0
Tyagan*

*6/90 - Called to see 6/26 - Leony
In Israel*



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
ONE KALISA WAY, SUITE 108, PARAMUS, NJ 07652 (201) 599-0080

NEW JERSEY-WEST HUDSON VALLEY COUNCIL

Rabbi Daniel H. Frelander
Regional Director

March 20, 1984

Salama for

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

I could tell from your facial expressions that you had some concerns with my Ethiopian Jewry presentation at the executive committee meeting of the Commission on Social Action yesterday. I sincerely would appreciate your advice and input on this matter. It would mean a great deal to me if I could meet with you for 20 minutes to discuss the situation in greater depth. I would be pleased to come into New York at your convenience.

Thanks very much!

B'shalom,

Glenn

Glenn S. Stein

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Administrative Assistant
Fran Kaplan
JFTY Youth Director
Glenn Stein
CNYFTY Youth Director
Sharon Halper



North American Conference On Ethiopian Jewry

200 Amsterdam Avenue • New York, New York 10023 • (212) 595-1759

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Honorary Chairman

January 1, 1984

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

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

We are most pleased to add your name to the Advisory Board of the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry. We hope to complete the task of putting the Advisory Board together by the end of this month.

We will certainly keep you advised as to the progress of this project and look forward to working with you on all issues pertaining to Ethiopian Jewry in the future.

Sincerely,

Barbara Ribakove
President

Jonathan B. Giesberg
Senior Vice President



North American Conference On Ethiopian Jewry

Ash Al

200 Amsterdam Avenue • New York, New York 10023 • (212) 595-1759

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Honorary Chairman

7/2/83

*OK To join;
I am too*

November 4, 1983

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

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

As you may know, the Ethiopian Jewish community faces an ongoing dangerous struggle to preserve their faith and secure their right to emigrate. Although the situation remains tense, in recent months signs of improvement have begun to appear due to the efforts of religious leaders like yourself and informed active groups like ours.

The North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry was founded nearly two years ago with the express purpose of saving the oppressed Jews of Ethiopia. We have worked consistently with the political and Jewish establishments in the United States and Israel. Our work has included education, famine relief, aid to refugees, cultural preservation and absorption.

We would be honored if you would join such eminent persons as Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Congressman William Green, Abraham Karlikow, Fred Ehrman and others as a member of our Advisory Board, so that we may call upon you from time to time for advice and counsel. We look forward to your acceptance, and have provided the enclosed response card for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Barbara M. Ribakove
Barbara Ribakove
President

Jonathan B. Giesberg
Jonathan B. Giesberg
Executive Vice President

A Nonprofit Organization



THESE JEWISH CHILDREN WANT TO LIVE!

**And they want to live
in Israel**

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Get involved. Urge American Jewish organizations and the State of Israel to make the rescue and *aliyah* of Ethiopian Jewry a matter of the highest priority. Write letters and demand prompt action. And join NACOEJ . . .

Please fill out the coupon and mail it to NACOEJ. Membership dues for one year are \$18.00. Additional contributions (all are tax-deductible) will be gratefully accepted, and like the dues, will be spent on efforts to relieve the suffering of the Jews of Ethiopia, aid in their rescue, and assist the successful absorption of those Jews who—after surviving tremendous odds—have reached Israel.

Please contact us at the address or phone number below for information about meetings, joining one of the committees working on specific projects, forming a NACOEJ chapter in your neighborhood, or obtaining a speaker.



North American Conference On Ethiopian Jewry
c/o Lincoln Square Synagogue
200 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10023
(212) 595-1759

A CALL TO ACTION

It is not too late to save the Jews of Ethiopia. But we must act at once!

The North American Conference On Ethiopian Jewry (NACOEJ) is a grassroots, activist, nonprofit organization founded in the summer of 1982 to initiate and foster immediate action and ongoing projects on behalf of the relief and rescue of Ethiopian Jewry. It is the intention of this organization to work both independently and, wherever possible, in concert with other concerned agencies, to respond quickly and effectively to the needs of Ethiopian Jewry.

GOALS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON ETHIOPIAN JEWRY

1. To bring closer the day when all Ethiopian Jews may live in freedom in Israel.
2. To assist Jews still in Ethiopia by improving their political and economic condition, providing medical aid and educational assistance, sustaining them in their efforts to remain Jewish, and protecting their basic human rights.
3. To assist those Ethiopian Jews who have escaped from Ethiopia to survive the refugee camps—and reach safe haven in Israel.
4. To assist those Ethiopian Jews who have managed to get to Israel in their *klitah* (absorption) into a new and modern society.
5. To preserve the unique heritage of *Beta Yisrael*: their history, religious practices, liturgy, literature, music, art, handicrafts, social structure, health-care system, etc.
6. To inform and galvanize the American Jewish community—through educational programs, political action, lobbying, and a Speakers Bureau, into acting *now* to save the remnant of Ethiopian Jews.

I want to help in this important work. Please enroll me as a member of NACOEJ.

I enclose a check for dues (\$18) ☐ and a contribution of \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 and more ☐.

Name _____

Telephone (home) _____

Address _____

What Jewish or communal organizations do you belong to? _____

I want to work in the following areas:

☐ Political Action ☐ Publicity ☐ Special Events ☐ Educational Programming ☐ Speakers Bureau ☐ Fund Raising ☐ Projects in Israel

Do you have any special skills that NACOEJ may put to use? (i.e., bookkeeping, clerical, legal, writing, media contacts, computers, etc.) _____

Please make checks payable to LINCOLN SQUARE SYNAGOGUE CHESED FUND (and mark "FALASHA") All contributions are tax-deductible. Thank you—with hopes for the speedy redemption of Ethiopian Jewry and all of Am Yisrael.

North American Conference On Ethiopian Jewry
c/o Lincoln Square Synagogue, 200 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10023. Telephone: (212) 595-1759

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Honorary Chairman

"Do not separate me, O L-rd, from the chosen,
From the joy, from the light, from the splendor.
Let me see, O L-rd, the light of Israel...
Abandon me not!"

—a *Falasha* prayer

The Jews of Ethiopia—*Beta Yisrael*, the House of Israel—want to live as Jews, in freedom, in the Jewish homeland.

This is their right—as promised by the State of Israel's Law of Return. This is their right—as guaranteed by the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This is their dream—as proud, deeply religious, observant Jews who long to make *aliyah* to the Land of Israel, to live freely as Jews, transmitting the Torah and the wealth of Jewish teachings and culture to their children.

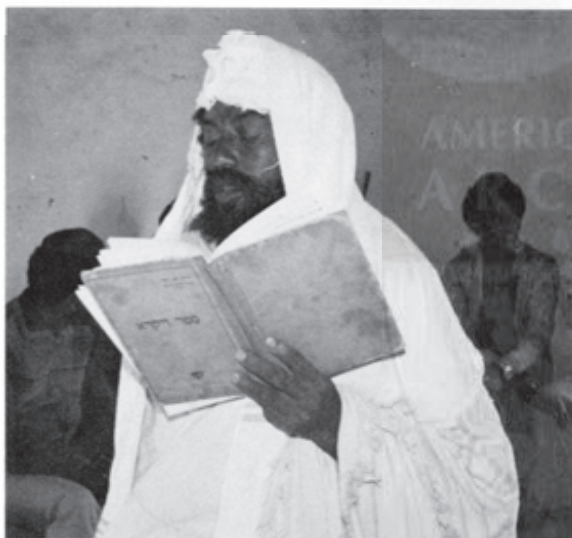
But the Marxist government of Ethiopia refuses to allow Ethiopian Jews to emigrate—even to be reunited with close relatives—spouses, parents, children, siblings—who may be in Israel.

WHO ARE THE ETHIOPIAN JEWS?

This Jewish community is an ancient one, dating back at least 2,000 years. Israel's former Chief Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef believes the *Beta Yisrael* to be descendants of the tribe of Dan, and with Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren, confirmed their identity as true Jews in the 1970s. The Jews of Ethiopia believe that their community dates from the time of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Other theories suggest that their ancestors were separated from the rest of *Bnei Yisrael* during the Exodus from Egypt at the

parting of the Red Sea; or were exiles who fled *Eretz Yisrael* after the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem; or were Jewish merchants from Elephantine who traveled south. Whatever their origins, the Jews of Ethiopia have staunchly maintained and handed down Jewish tradition through centuries of persecution.

It is thought that, at their height in the 12th century, there were half a million Jews in Ethiopia. A century ago, there were at least 100,000 Ethiopian Jews. The onslaughts of pogroms, rape, pillage, enslavement, war, famine, disease, forced conversion, and assimilation have reduced the remnant of Ethiopian Jewry to an estimated 25,000 survivors.



WHAT IS JEWISH LIFE IN ETHIOPIA?

It is not easy to be a Jew in Ethiopia.

Today, a severe drought and widespread famine threaten all Ethiopians. In Jewish and non-Jewish villages, tourists report that children with bloated bellies, deficiency diseases, and parasites are hungry and malnourished. In remote areas, there are no doctors, clinics, or medicines available.

Beta Yisrael live and die in impoverished villages—where the average life expectancy is 35 years. They are the iron workers, the potters and weavers skilled in crafts—and treated as pariahs by a hostile society that calls them "Buda" (evil eye) and "Falasha" (Stranger).

In Gondar province, where most of the Jews live, Jewish parents are forbidden to teach their children about Judaism. Religious teachings and the Hebrew language are proscribed. The Jewish schools have been closed and the teachers dismissed. Those children who go to school at all are taught by Marxists—and receive no Jewish education.

In Gondar, the authorities have closed some synagogues and have forbidden Jews to pray, study, or gather freely in others that remain, defaming Jewish tradition and observance, and attempting to force the Jews to violate the Sabbath by ordering them to attend official meetings on *shabbat*.

In Ethiopia, there is a curfew, and travel is restricted. Jews require permits to travel between villages. If a Jew manages to escape the country, the immediate family members may be imprisoned and tortured. If caught, a Jew can expect imprisonment for many months. Men, women, teenagers, and the elderly have been imprisoned.

Outside of Ethiopia, in the Horn of Africa, thousands of Ethiopian Jews have been trapped for years in desperate and horrific conditions in refugee camps. They do not have adequate food, water, medication, shelter, or sanitation. Some, especially children, die of malnutrition, typhus, dysentery, and other diseases. Some have died at the hands of other refugees and local anti-Semitic authorities.

Time is running out for Ethiopian Jewry.



SAVE ETHIOPIAN JEWRY!



MEMORANDUM

CONFIDENTIALDate February 22, 1983From Albert VorspanTo Alex Ross; Harris Gilbert; Rabbis Glaser, Schindler and Saperstein

Copy for information of _____

Subject FALASHAS

I went to a special briefing at B'nai B'rith with a handful of professionals in the Jewish community who are uneasy about the answers we get both from the Israelis and from the American Association for Ethiopian Jews. The gist of new information is: There is a fundamental shift going on inside Ethiopia, with a swing away from the Soviet Union and Cuba and a potentially significant (but secret) improvement in Israel-Ethiopia relations. So far not much improvement in United States-Ethiopian relations.

This change has already had some results. Delegations of Jewish leaders from the World Jewish Congress and the State of Israel have visited the Falashas in recent weeks. They report marked and positive internal changes -- reopening of some synagogues, reinstitution of some Jewish educational facilities, but it is still a generation of ignorance. None of this appears to have reduced the eagerness of the Ethiopian Jews to make aliyah and as soon as possible. Tourism to Ethiopia is now being encouraged.

Meanwhile, there also seems to be an improvement in the integration of Falashas into Israeli life. There are now more than 2,000. More came in under the Begin government than under all previous administrations. Fair is fair. Reports are that, under Labor, the Falashas were dismissed as "not Zionist material."

Sudan is a big problem. Libya is leaning on a weak regime there. Sudanese military sweeps and the shortage of gas are making rescue efforts very tough. The central problem from the Israeli standpoint is the danger of singling out the Jews in the camps, giving them special preference, etc., because it arouses violence and trouble. The assistance must not exceed the level of all others. Israelis deny that the Falashas in the camps are starving. Israel will not reply to public criticism, which they regard as most dangerous to their rescue efforts and even worse, from their standpoint, is the intervention of private and ill-conceived rescue efforts by the American Association or anyone else.

In December, 25 Falashas came out, and in January 120 came out in two separate groups.

Dear Rabbi Shindler 6-21
Please try to help the group
in Ghana "Urgent"

For reference, contact
Mr David Horowitz
Room 373, Press Section
United Nations
and

Mr Barnard Sharrow
55 Granby Lane
Killingboro, NJ
08046

609-871-9411.

Jewish choice group
at Mt Zion Temple
making good
progress.

(2).

I support 100% your call
for "Outreach" It comes
at a time when Judaism
must expand its
out reach every where
God Bless you for
your insight,
courage & outreach

Shalom

Shalom

Archie Dinitzky
(member Mt Zion
Synagogue)

215 So Dunlap
#18

St Paul. Minn 55105

Edie ignore

HOUSE OF ISRAEL - ZION

Edie spare me

OFFICERS:

Founder & Spiritual Head
Aaron Ahomtre-Toakyirifah
Richard Asare (President)
P. O. Box 4402 KUMASI



P. O. Box 189,
Sefwi Wiawso
Western Region
Ghana

Our Ref _____

Your Ref _____

9th June 1982. *M*

My dear brother in Israel - Shalom, Shalom!

May the Lord of Israel Bless you and keep you! May His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you and May His Countenance be lifted upon you and give you peace!"

A reply to your letter of 5th April 1982 was posted on the 17th of May 1982 and as a bad luck would have it, it was posted back to me at Sefwi Wiawso on the 3rd of June 1982.

As a result, I am writing this second one in Accra where I am applying for an international passport in place of the West African one I am using at moment. But the road in obtaining the international passport here in Ghana is not easy. One has to spend about two thousand cedis about seven hundred dollars before he or her can receive an international passport, as the new Government do not want Ghanaians to leave the country.

The situation here in Ghana is now from bad to worst as there are no soap, food, meat and other essential commodities in the markets. The few ones we come by are sold at cut throat prices and only the rich can buy them. Ordinary Ghanaians have to be in queue for about three hours before he gets a cake of soap and at times after three hours in queue, you are told the bars are finished. Gh! what a pity.

P. T. O

Shalom

Day in and day out Traders and Drivers develop new tricks to defeat the Government Plans to make life bearable for the ordinary Ghanaian. So the poor are suffering more.

With my father's case still pending at Sekondi High Court and Opening of the children's school at Sefwi Wiawso and Kerekum I am busy as a bee. I am finding it difficult in solving my father's case as I do not have money. But in Ghana money talks true.

Barnard G. Sharrow has written to me and plans to visit us here in September this year. The entire House of Israel - Zion here have received the news with much heartening and are preparing for him.

Though we would face many problems in obtaining transport facilities for his trucks to the other branches during the two to three weeks stay with us in Ghana. There are hotels and restaurants at Sefwi Wiawso but Nana Owusu Acheampong has promised him a free room at his rest house at Sefwi Wiawso. A hiring car for ~~the~~ three weeks would cost us about two thousand dollars and a ~~Hotel~~ Hotel expenses in excluding food would also cost us one thousand dollars for three weeks.

Have received the Kiddush Cup sent by Meyer and Gladys Zisson and a note of thanks which have since been sent to them.

I last said the wages for the four hired teachers is five hundred and twenty dollars a month (\$520 a month).

Many thanks for the advice about Dr. F.O. Walter. I have not seen or heard from him since December 1987 year. Many thanks to all friends.

Sincerely yours,
Aaron Ahomaa - ~~AKA 9/1/1988~~

Do not
write
in either
margin

SEFWI WIAWSO SECONDARY SCHOOL
SEFWI WIAWSO

1

Name Aduhene Moses Boachie

Form Form 4¹³ 4^B

Subject Bible Knowledge Date 22/3/82



Aduhene Moses Boachie,
House of Israel (Zion)
Post office Box 189,
Sefwi Wiawso.
Western Region Ghana.
10th May 1982.

Dear elder A.R. Vinnitsky,

Here comes a sorrowful song from
a converted black Jew, who has the above mentioned
name. I termed it as a song but at the same time
it can also be considered as a cry for help. All the same
it has been written in the book of the prophet Jeremiah
that every Jew must all the time feel happy.

First of all I would like you to know that, as your
good name has been advertised from the letters and books
you sent to Ahomeats all the time. As a result of this, I
would ^{like} you also to know the background of my conversion
of becoming a reformed Jew. "Here it states," I am a
boy of 17 years of age. I belong to the Sefwi tribe in
Asona clan. I come from the small village called Sefwi
Adiembra just three miles from Wiawso our Sefwi ca-
pital. In fact my family is as poor as the word itself
of course but all the same I always feel happy as I
stated earlier on. But then before I converted to become
a Jew, I came to realise that the teaching and preaching
of Afromthometre Toatigbata who according to his large
dramatic accounts saw a vision which was very terrible indeed

P. T. O.

indicating that, he must follow the footsteps of the old Israelites in from the Call of Abraham to the Early settlement in the land of Canaan. In fact I did not see Sam but according to his good teaching about his vision, I believed in him that he was rather on the main path leading to a true religion. So my faith was firm, fair and I had a good courage too. I could not detect from the early days of my conversion that I was by then living an exemplary life. But one thing that caused me a great harm was that, I am a student so I am under restriction to my parents who were unbelievers to this act of religion so I was even deprived from taking their meals but all of a sudden my brothers in the Union took a strong hold of me, and took every thing upon themselves and be in charge of my schooling. Meanwhile, following this tragicomic point of view it was said from an old saying that, 'when the Idant is in the house, the she-goat is not allowed to suffer the pains of perforation on its theater'. I became very serious with my books and I hope I am now among the best scholars in my class and I am holding the post of foot-ball Captain or Sports Captain in my school at the same time a great lover of virtue. These are the subjects I am offering ① HISTORY, ② BIBLE KNOWLEDGE, ③ FRENCH, ④ ENGLISH LITERATURE, ⑤ ECONOMICS, ⑥ MATHS, ⑦ ENGLISH ZAMBUANGA and BIOLOGY. In fact of all the under mentioned subjects, I am very much particular about History, B.K. and English Language. So since I am very serious about preaching to them the traditional Religion of Israel, I have been given the name of Modes of Israel but I like the name very much. So finally I don't want to say much but the only thing is that I need your help please I need your help to bring me some books as well as some Jewish uniform to go to service on Sabbath days to gether with a Jewish traditional book so as to teach the little children in the Jewish school as started by Phuntre already. Thank you.

Please I hope for successful grant
and by dint of hard working and persi-
everance, Everything will be in good order
So nature must obey necessity.

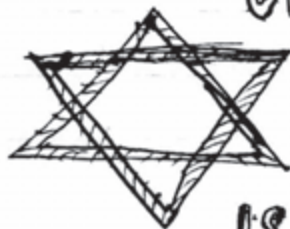
ending with my greetings to you all

Yours Sincerely

Adhune Moses Boadine
of Israel.

~~Adhune Moses Boadine~~
AMERICAN ARCHIVES

UNITED



ISRAEL

SHALOM

SHALOM

ZION

May the time not be distance & but when
thy name shall be worshiped in all the earth
when unbelief shall disappear and error be
no more. We fervently pray that the day may
come when corruption shall find way to purity
and goodness. When superstition shall know longer
and embrace the mind our advantage and blessing.

Falashas

October 9, 1981

Rabbi Judea B. Miller
Temple B'rith Kodesh
2131 Elmwood Avenue
Rochester, NY 14618

Dear Rabbi Miller:

As Rabbi Schindler is out-of-the-country I am taking the liberty of replying to your letter in regard to the Falashas.

All matters dealing with the Falashas fall within the purview of our Social Action department. Thus, I am sharing your letter with Al Vorspan and asking him to contact you directly.

With best wishes for the New Year, I am

Sincerely,

Edith J. Miller
Assistant to the President

cc: Mr. Albert Vorspan

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

July 20, 1981

Donald S. Day, Esq.

Rabbi Stephen Schafer

FALASHAS

I discussed the Falasha problem with several high ranking officials both in the Prime Minister's office and in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem.

As I indicated to you in an earlier memo, Steve, I am absolutely convinced that Begin is convinced that everything possible is being done for them. It may be true, of course, that the program is not as effective as it might be due to some recalcitrance by personnel at a lower level but I do not think that Begin's determination can be questioned.

In any event, in both places I was assured that there will be absolutely no difficulty in integrating these Falashas youngsters in Israel and in gaining their admission to Israel once they are in the U.S.

For your further information and this I did not know before and it can be important for you to know, there are three groups of Falashas in Ethiopia"

The Gondar
The Tigre
The Wolkit

These groups do not get along with each other at all, there is bad blood between them which at times leads to violence. You ought to keep this information in the back of your mind.

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

July 2, 1981

Rabbi Stephen Schafer

While in Jerusalem I cleared all matters pertaining to the Falasha Project. I am convinced that at least Begin is convinced that everything possible is being done. In any event, they will be no difficulty with Klitah.



PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

May 28, 1981

His Excellency, The Israeli Ambassador
Ephraim Evron
Embassy of Israel
Washington, D.C.

Dear Eppie:

As I told you over the telephone, we have an opportunity, so we are advised, to bring over some young Falashas for our summer camp program. Apparently the Ethiopian Government will accede to requests for temporary visas to the United States for young people and even for some adults if they are involved on a counselor-teacher level. Our summer camp program offers a unique opportunity to exploit this opportunity.

I do have one question, however, which is urgent if we are to proceed with this offer full scale. Should some of these young people decide to emigrate to Israel will they be granted admission and is there a procedure for their integration?

I would appreciate it, Eppie, if you were to relay this question on a confidential basis to the Home Office. You suggested Hanan Baron, he would be an excellent choice because of his personal concern.

Time is of the essence inasmuch as these arrangements must be made rather quickly.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

4/18
Any Response?
No -
Double check



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

YOUTH DIVISION
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

M E M O

June 24, 1981

FROM: Rabbi Stephen A. Schafer
TO: Mr. Donald Day
cc: Rabbi Alexander Schindler ✓

Pursuant to our telephone conversation concerning the Falashas, I am sending you this memorandum of the basic points so that you can share the ideas we discussed with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' officers. I wish to receive your approval and cooperation with this project.

Enclosed is a Ma'ariv article about the plight of the Falashas. The situation is desperate. There appears to be a possibility of bringing teenage Falashas to the United States under the auspices of the Eisendrath International Exchange Program, in the manner which we discussed on the telephone. A student would be sponsored by an individual family and housed in one of our camps. At the proper time, the student would make aliyah to Israel.

There are two organizations in North America, namely The Canadian Association for Falasha Jews and the American Association for Falasha Jews, which will bear all costs to carry out this program. There is reason to believe that between 250 and 300 young people could be rescued through our program.

Next week I will join a group which will meet with several Senators in order to enlist their aid on behalf of the Falashas.

Alex joins me in the belief that we must do whatever we can in order to save our Jewish brethren in Ethiopia.

Falashas

June 16, 1980

Warren Freedman, Esq.
81 Stratford Road
New Rochelle, N.Y. 10804

Dear Mr. Freedman:

I am writing to acknowledge your letter of June 13 which reached our office during the absence of Rabbi Schindler. He is currently out-of-the-country and not due back at his desk until late-June. Be assured your letter will be brought to his attention when he returns.

Since our Vice President and Director of Social Action, Albert Vorspan, is involved in our efforts in behalf of the Falashian Jews I have taken the liberty of sharing your letter with him.

With kindest greetings, I am

Sincerely,

Edith J. Miller
Assistant to the President

cc: aw

WARREN FREEDMAN

ATTORNEY AT LAW

81 STRATFORD ROAD, NEW ROCHELLE, NEW YORK 10804

NEW ROCHELLE 3-6431

June 13, 1980

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

Dear Rabbi,

It is unfortunate that there is so much needless public furor in the American Jewish Community about the welfare of the 25,000 Falashim still in Ethiopia. Their welfare is indeed important, vital and urgent, they have been for too long the victims of poverty, persecution and general neglect by the Jewish community, BUT the spotlight of publicity engendered by many committed Jews, simply ties the hands of the Israeli Government in its day-to-day efforts to rescue these victims of poverty and civil war. The Falashim, like other Ethiopians, are today suffering from the violence which has permeated their country.

I believe that the Government of Israel is urgently aware of the problem, and has and will continue to save countless Falashim without the fanfare of publicity. Israel would be embarrassed to disclose publicly the larger number of Falashim in Israel today. The Falasha black skin is simply NOT a factor, and there has been no neglect of their plight, as argued by those impatient but sincere Jews. The diplomatic approach involving secret movement of Falashim by the Israel Government is preferable to pressure from well-intentioned Jewish leaders and organizations.

Above all, no one will forget nor forgive anything less than the rescue of Ethiopian Jewry. We must continue to espouse their cause. But we must temper enthusiasm with wisdom by permitting the Israeli Government to work quietly and undisturbedly through diplomatic and other channels to rescue these unfortunate brethren. In the words of the

AAEJ -- now is the time "to get on as one people to fight
the major forces from the outside that threaten world Jewry
and the State of Israel."

Sincerely yours,

Warren Freedman

Warren Freedman

WF:bs



American Association for Ethiopian Jews

[A merger of the American Pro-Falasha Committee and the Friends of Beta-Israel (Falasha) Community in Ethiopia]

Eastern Regional Office
340 Cortes Avenue
Pelham, New York 10803
(914) 738-0956

National Materials Center
6505 Wilshire Blvd., Room 802
Los Angeles, California 90048
(213) 852-1234 Ext. 276

Western Regional Office
304 Robin Hood Lane
Costa Mesa, California 92627
(714) 642-8613

October 10, 1980

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler,
President
Union of American Hebrew
Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

RE: Ethiopian Jews

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

Two years ago I mailed letters to your organization as well as to the presidents of the other major Jewish organizations regarding the holocaust facing our brethren in Ethiopia. I enclosed excerpts from their letters forwarning us of the impending dangers facing our people there. Few of you responded. Finally, on January 1, 1979, the Falashas, in desperation, demonstrated against the State of Israel and world Jewish leadership for their inaction regarding the Falashas.

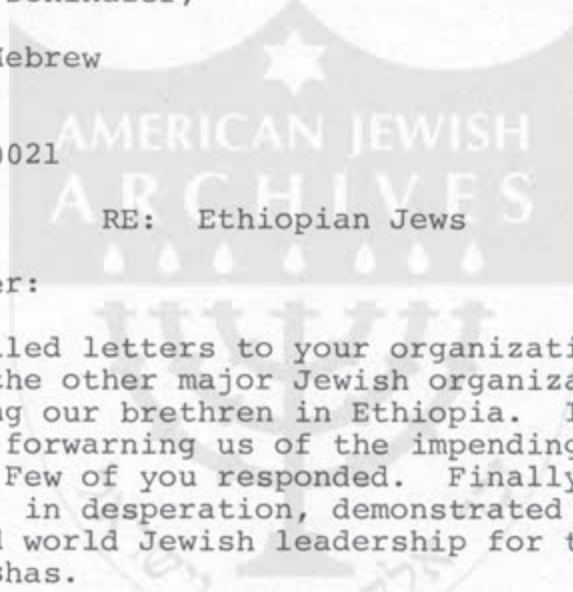
Today, 32 years after the founding of the State of Israel, less than 1,000 of the 28,000 remnant Falashas are in Israel. Our organization continues to receive reports of: (1) Falashas imprisoned and tortured; (2) young people killed or raped by Ethiopian missionaries; (3) thousands dispossessed from their homes with their villages pillaged by either remaining feudal landowners or by roving bandit gangs; (4) thousands of others living in the starvation belt of Africa; (5) people still being sold as slaves, some being traded many times over; and now (6) over a thousand living under the most horrible conditions in a hostile country outside of Ethiopia while awaiting Jewish help.

In short, what we would like to know is: "What does your organization plan to do about this impoverished and endangered Jewish community which appears to be on the verge of extinction?"

A copy of the last annual report may be obtained from the New York State Board of Social Welfare,
Office Tower, Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12242, or from the Association

Contributions are tax deductible

*Best
Don't
answer.
Too
felligient
and arrogant
in tone
H*



I would appreciate a response before October 19 when our Board of Directors meets to discuss our future actions. If we do not see major Jewish organizations taking on the responsibility and mitzvot of pikuach nefesh and pidyon shvuim, we may reluctantly decide to undertake a massive newspaper and publicity campaign to carry out these responsibilities ourselves.

If you would like more information and specific suggestions as to how your organization can help, please contact me by either letter or telephone.

May the coming year bring peace to Israel, redemption to the Falashas, and success to your organization.

Sincerely and shalom,

Howard M. Lenhoff

Howard M. Lenhoff, President, AAEJ
and Professor, University of California



Q.: What did Ministry of Interior Head (and also NRP boss) Dr. Yosef Burg say regarding charges he was opposed to Falasha immigration?

A.: Burg denied that he led the forces opposed to Beta Israel aliyah. "It was never brought up in the cabinet," he said in an interview. Burg made no attempt to hide his contempt for the Beta Israel. "You could just as well write about the Martians," he said. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: What do you think about Israelis protesting for the rescue of the Falashas?

A.: The cause to rescue the Falashas is uniting Israelis from all political factions. This is purely a Zionist and humanitarian issue. It gets at the heart of what Israel stands for. It knows no politics. (Israel Today)

Q.: Could we have saved the Falashas in recent times?

A.: (We) missed a golden opportunity to save the Ethiopian Jews in the months after the fall of Haile Selassie, a key figure in Israel's Africa policy. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: Is it worthwhile for the government to make a major effort to bring the Falashas to Israel?

A.: From an official poll: 33 per cent, Certainly worthwhile to make a major effort; 35 per cent, Yes, it is worthwhile; 14 per cent, It is not so worthwhile; 10 per cent, No opinion; 8 per cent, Against such an effort.

Q.: Are you ready to absorb Falashas

.....?

A.: From the official poll: 1. At place of work, 91 per cent yes; 2. In same neighborhood, 85 per cent yes; 3. In schools and children's places of study and play, 85 per cent yes; 4. In same apartment building, 75 per cent yes.

Q.: What must we do now?*

A.: What is needed is a concerted rescue effort embracing the government and the major world

Jewish organizations for history will neither forget nor forgive anything less. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: What do you want the government of Israel to do?

A.: We call on the Israeli government and the Jewish Agency to increase their activities and to do everything in their power to save Ethiopian Jewry and to help them finally to reach Eretz Yisrael. (Maariv)

The government of Israel (must) deliver the Jews of Ethiopia of the land of Cush. We brought the Jews of Yemen out on a Magic Carpet. Let's find another for the Jews of Ethiopia. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: Is it the responsibility of Israel and world Jewry to rescue the Falashas?

A.: (The) latest news on the difficult situation of the Falasha Jews in Ethiopia obligates Israel and the entire Jewish people to take urgent steps to save them. We must not accept their bitter fate with the claim that it is not our responsibility but that of political and state bodies, as we did in the past.

Despite their long struggle, the Falashas were prevented from immigrating to Israel by unjustified delays and procrastination.

...There is no doubt that we must accept responsibility for our Falasha brothers. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: But why should Israel with all her trouble be concerned about the Falashas?

A.: Because "they are Jews." They are suffering because they are Jews and we, the free Jews of the world, must save them. (Israel Today)

"The Zionist movement... create(d) the government of Israel... to save the lives of Jews. If it doesn't do that, then why does it exist?" (L.A. Times)

Israeli Falasha to Speak In Winnipeg February 21

"I will walk to the port of Massawa. It is dangerous because of the Shifita bandits and Eritrean rebels, but I will move at night. It will take many months, but I will arrive somehow. Then I will find work on a boat which sails up the Red Sea. The vessel will take me to Eilat and from there I will swim ashore. When I touch the land, I will kiss it and then I will ask Moshe Dayan to take me into his army so that I can defend the Jewish homeland. Afterward, I will send for my family."

When Rachamim Alazar, an Ethiopian Jew, spoke these words to an Israeli visitor in 1970, he was 16 years old. Nearly three years later, his dream fulfilled, Rachamim arrived in Israel. He did not have to undergo the ordeal he had foreseen — his Israeli friend bought him a ticket on El Al — but he did have to walk barefoot across Ethiopia at night to Addis Ababa.

Mr. Alazar will be in Winnipeg on Thursday, February 21, as part of a North American speaking tour. He will address an open community meeting at the Rosh Pina Synagogue at 8 p.m. He will describe the ever-deteriorating state of the Beta Israel — as the Falashas refer to themselves — and suggest ways in which Canadian Jews can help prevent their disappearance.

Rachamim Alazar, born in the village of Sakalt in Ethiopia's northwestern province of Gondar, is one of nine children in a traditional Falasha family.

He attended area schools from the age of 10, followed by a government high school at 15.

Following his emigration to Israel, Mr. Alazar attended high school and will graduate from Tel Aviv University in 1980 with a

Bachelors Degree in Middle Eastern History and African Affairs. He has also served in the Israel Defence Forces.

Fluent in Hebrew, Swahili, Amharic, English, Gez, Tigrinit, and Literary Arabic, Mr. Alazar has been a member of Israel's Association of Ethiopian Jews since 1973 and treasurer since April, 1979.

Married in September 1979, Mr. Alazar has been interviewed in the past for several publications, including Maariv, The Jerusalem Post, and Israeli radio and television. As spokesman for the Ethiopian Jewish community, he has been active in pressing the case of his brethren with top



RACHAMIM ALAZAR

Israeli officials such as Prime Minister Begin, President Navon, and Chief Rabbis Yosef and Goren, Labor Party leader Shimon Peres, etc.

Whereas a scant 60 years ago, there were more than 50,000 Ethiopian Jews, today there are no more than 28,000, and that remnant is in imminent peril of extinction. In the last few years,

never-ending war, rebellion, starvation, missionary efforts, and Jewish indifference have combined to cause a steady decrease

in their numbers. In the last few years, probably at least 2000 have died; more than 7000 have been dispossessed of their homes and farms, left to roam the countryside hungry and penniless; hundreds at least are reported rotting in refugee camps outside Ethiopia.

If the Falashas are to be saved, if this unique community is not to become another tragic episode in the long history of Jewish martyrdom, Jews all over the world must marshal their resources. The Beta Israel (and there is no longer any disagreement about this view) see their only hope of salvation as lying in aliyah to Israel, and only the combined efforts of Israel, the large Jewish organizations, and the Jewish people themselves can effect it.

For a first-hand account of the plight of the Falashas, as well as for a chance to ask questions and to find out how it can help, the entire community is more than invited, it is urged, to attend this vital meeting.

Rachamim Alazar's Winnipeg visit is co-sponsored by the Jewish Students' Network, which is responsible for Canadian arrangements, and the Canadian Friends of Ethiopian Jews. This North American tour was sponsored by American Association for Ethiopian Jews, with the arrangements made by the American Sephardi Federation.

For more information, call Canadian Friends of Ethiopian Jews, 582-4355, 582-9241, and 233-6516, or the Jewish Students' Association 474-9325.

A View from Israeli Journals

Do Israelis Want the Falashas?

By PROFESSOR
HOWARD M. LENHOFF
University of California
(first of two parts)

"All this fuss about the Falashas is being made to satisfy a bunch of sick Americans who would never invite a black to their homes." Thus spoke a high official in the Jewish Agency (salary paid for with UJA contributions) when asked at a recent meeting in Jerusalem about Israel's newly announced "public campaign" on behalf of the Jews from Ethiopia.

Does he have a point, however? Is it only North American Jews who want to rescue the Falashas or does the Israeli man in the street also want the Falashas to immigrate to Israel? How do Israeli newspapers and journalists react to their own government's policies that have led to only approximately 150 Falashas immigrating into Israel over the past five years while nearly 400 Vietnamese boat people were brought to Israel in 1979 alone?

To provide an answer, I am posing a list of such questions, and will give responses consisting of verbatim quotations from Israeli citizens and newspapers.

Q.: Why do you think the Falashas are bitter and have resorted to public demonstrations?

A.: The Falashas' bitterness is certainly understandable. Israel and the world Jewish community have devoted massive energy and resources on behalf of Soviet Jewry; the government has mounted rescue operations on behalf of the Vietnamese boat people and

Cambodian refugees. But the Falashas, who, unlike the Asian refugees, are Jews, and unlike the 70 to 80 per cent of drop-out Soviet Jews, want to come to Israel, have been neglected. And that neglect must be considered a mortal blow, for the Falashas, who today number only about 20,000, face total physical extinction. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: What do you think about the tone of the response given by Jewish Agency officials to the Falasha demonstration?

A.: The sensitive and extreme reaction given by the top echelon of the Department of Immigration creates an impression of a conscience that is not entirely clean....How can it be explained that, despite the massive Israeli presence in Ethiopia for ten years, Israel could not succeed in bringing in those thousands of Falashas that were indeed ready to immigrate? (Davar)

Q.: What is your response to the remarks of Yehuda Dominitz (head of the Department of Immigration and Absorption in the Jewish Agency) who said, "there is no Israeli diplomatic presence in Ethiopia and it is (therefore) difficult to work for the aliyah of the Falashas, scattered in 490 villages?"

A.: We must say that this is irresponsible drivel. Until 1973 Israel did have a presence in Ethiopia under very good conditions, but the Department of Aliyah and Absorption did nothing for the rescue of the Jews of Ethiopia. Israel then had free access to each of the 490 villages where the scattered Jews of

Ethiopia lived, but nothing was done to become involved with them.

...Everyone knows that Israel has no official representation in the Soviet Union; yet, she turned the world upside down, successfully, so that Soviet Jews might leave for the Western World. Israel has no representation in any East European land, except Rumania; yet, remarkably, what exertions Israel is making to save the Jews of Eastern Europe. (Bamaaracha)

Q.: What, then, is Mr. Dominitz's attitude toward the Falashas?

A.: Yehuda Dominitz of the Jewish Agency had this to say shortly before the 1975 decision recognizing the Beta Israel as Jews: "Take a Falasha out of his village, it's like taking a fish out of water...we are told that the aliyah potential is minute. Most of the ones who came to Israel felt lost and went home. I'm not in favor of bringing them." Dominitz says he later changed his mind. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: Is there any written evidence that the Jewish Agency was discouraging Falasha immigration to Israel?

A.: A document prepared six years ago by an Absorption Ministry researcher recommended to the Government and the Jewish Agency not to encourage Falasha aliyah to Israel. (JTA)

Q.: What do you think of the role of Israel's Foreign Ministry in regard to the Falashas?

A.: The Foreign Ministry's interference with the struggle to save the Falashas is based on judgements that have nothing to

do with the issue. (Maariv)

Q.: What is your opinion about the claim that past and present Ethiopian governments would never allow Falashas to leave the country?

A.: It is difficult to believe that the Emperor or the new regime held on with their fingernails to the few thousands of Falasha Jews that were there. (Davar)

Q.: Does the fault lie with the Begin or Labor government?

A.: The tale of neglect is long. It certainly cannot be placed solely at the hands of Mr. Begin's government. But it is nevertheless true that this government is continuing this neglect, despite the dangers facing the Falashas. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: Aren't you pleased that the government has appointed committees to look into the matter of Falasha immigration?

A.: The shocking point in all that affair is that less than 300 Falashas succeeded in coming to Israel, and all that after indecisions, meetings, discussions, and conferences for close to 10 years...from all this intellectual effort, nothing was accomplished. (Davar)

Q.: After all these years of various committees working on Falasha issues, why didn't the Falashas come to Israel?

A.: The Falashas did not come because they were not wanted. This is the naked truth and it must be said. (Davar)

Q.: What are the reasons that the government of Israel is not doing enough for the Falashas?

A.: The first is prejudice — the color of their skin. The government does not want them here. And also the government doesn't want to endanger diplomatic contacts with African states (L.A. Times)

Q.: Do you think it really has something to do with color?

A.: One of the responsible shlichim of the Agency who is not concerned with this matter reported on the weekly review on Israeli radio that a highly responsible person in the State, a person with a great religious responsibility, said to him: "Mi Tzarich et hashcchorim ha-eleh?" (Who needs those Blacks?) (Bamaaracha)

Q.: What is the source of the neglect of the Falashas by Israel?

A.: The source of that neglect derives historically from the narrow dogmatism and bigotry expressed on this issue by key functionaries located primarily in the National Religious Party. (Jerusalem Post)

Q.: Who do you hold responsible for this inaction?

A.: The Minister of the Interior and a few servile bureaucrats who did what their master wanted them to do, they are the ones responsible for this inaction. (Davar)

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