



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 B: Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, 1962-1996.

---

Box  
20

Folder  
7

Belgrade conference, 1978.

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

---



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

JAN 07 1978

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

The Belgrade meeting of the CSCE adjourned as expected on December 22 without reaching agreement on a document to conclude the conference. As you may be aware, December 22 was set as a target date for completion of the conference, with the possibility of an extension beginning in mid-January if work were not completed. The conference will, therefore, resume work on Tuesday, January 17, and continue for approximately one month. However, it will not conclude until there has been agreement on a final document and on a date and place for the next similar meeting.

Given the considerable amount of work presented delegates in the working groups which I discussed in my last letter, it was evident even in November that the December 22 target date would be difficult to meet. Although the United States would have preferred to conclude the meeting on schedule, we believed that it was important to complete a full discussion of all issues before deciding on the form and content of the final document. As I have reported in earlier letters, this discussion has been exceedingly thorough, and I believe American interests are served by taking advantage of the extra time available for drafting the final document.

Now that conference participants have moved to consideration of the final document, the Belgrade meeting will enter a new phase. This means that the general remarks which characterized the review of implementation phase will be replaced by detailed discussion of the issues which emerged from this general review. As demonstrated during the review phase, there continue to be major disagreements between participants from East and West on several of the major issues raised in the Final

Act. This means that the process of drafting a final document will be difficult. Since all decisions at the CSCE must be taken by consensus, the Soviets can block agreement on any passages with which they do not agree. It is, therefore, likely that the final document, being a compromise among all 35 participating states, will not contain language on human rights and other practical issues which is as strong as that used by Ambassador Goldberg and other Western delegates during the review phase. If the final document does not fully reflect our views, however, we will make clear in public any areas where we favored and advocated stronger formulations.

But, as I have noted in earlier letters, the purpose of the Belgrade meeting was not to reach a new agreement or to change the Helsinki Final Act in any way. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct "a thorough exchange of views" on commitments contained in the Final Act and to examine ways of increasing cooperation in the future. I think it can be safely said that this "thorough exchange" has in fact taken place. Perhaps even more significant is the fact that the determination of the West, and of the United States in particular, to pursue the important human rights provisions of the Final Act has been firmly demonstrated to the Soviets and their allies. We have also demonstrated that discussion of such issues is a legitimate aspect of the CSCE and in no way harms the long-term process initiated with signature of the Final Act. These achievements will be of fundamental importance to our efforts to achieve practical progress in the human rights field in the future.

A more detailed discussion of our strategy for the Belgrade meeting and experience with CSCE during the past six months is contained in President Carter's semiannual report on implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, which was transmitted to the joint Congressional-Executive CSCE Commission on December 3. We are currently printing copies of this report, and you will receive one shortly through the mail. Today I am enclosing, for your information, a copy of Ambassador Goldberg's Human Rights Day



speech, delivered in Belgrade on December 9 to commemorate the 29th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

In my next letter I will provide our first impressions of the drafting phase in Belgrade. At that time, I hope to give a better picture of the document which is likely to emerge from the meeting.

In the meantime, please accept my best wishes for the New Year. I look forward to receiving any comments you may have on this letter or on issues relating to the CSCE.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

Matthew Nimetz.





Ambassador Goldberg's Human Rights Day Speech,  
delivered in Belgrade CSCE Plenary by Ambassador  
Goldberg, December 9, 1977, to commemorate the  
29th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal  
Declaration of Human Rights.

Mr. Chairman,

It is altogether fitting that this Belgrade meeting,  
as you have done, Mr. Chairman, take proper recognition  
that tomorrow is Human Rights Day. My government and  
most other members of the United Nations, as well as  
many groups and individuals, will be observing the 29th  
anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration  
of Human Rights, which as I noted in a prior intervention,  
is incorporated by reference in the Final Act. Today I  
would like to suggest that the participating states of  
the Helsinki Accord have a special opportunity to do more  
than "observe" this event of transcendent importance.  
Separately and together, we can, if we have the political  
will, translate the rhetoric of celebration into the  
concluding document and into actions that will benefit  
our citizens as individuals and our nations as members  
of a stable worldwide community.

At the heart of the Universal Declaration is its  
recognition that "the inherent dignity and the equal  
and inalienable rights of members of the human family"  
lie at "the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in

the world." That same concept animates the Final Act. It is paraphrased in the preamble, detailed in Principle 7 and specified in the Act's humanitarian provisions.

As a concept, the link between the dignity of the individual and the just ordering of the society in which he lives is an old precept for many of our societies. As a foundation of international order, it is a relatively innovative idea, a vision born of two world wars and the determination to promote justice, liberty, and economic security. The Universal Declaration speaks of "barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind" and ties their prevention to the promotion of "friendly relations between nations."

Our conference in Belgrade has been exploring ways in which to deepen those relations, not least through the promotion of the human rights the Universal Declaration proclaimed. We are approaching the time for action -- the drafting of our final document based on this review of our shortcomings as well as the advances we have made and the proposals tabled. It is appropriate to summarize the possibilities and challenges before us.

The United States delegation has consistently adhered to the view that this meeting has been, and is, required frankly and honestly to review the record of the implementation by all of the signatory states, as well as to



consider new proposals to further implementation. We also are of the view that we are obligated individually and collectively to reaffirm our determination to fulfill our solemn undertakings in the Final Act. Further, we firmly believe that we must give adequate consideration to the Final Act's innovative commitment on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief and we must comply with these provisions. To this end my delegation, joined by others, has sponsored proposal BM/60 reaffirming Principle 7 and seven other resolutions emphasizing and endorsing other specific humanitarian measures of the Final Act.

We should, in the opinion of my delegation, and in fidelity to the Final Act, also give special and collective acknowledgement to the valuable and privileged, and what should be the protected, role of individuals and organizations in furthering the process of implementation through their public scrutiny of developments and practices in their own and in other signatory countries. This too is the subject of a proposal which we and others have tabled.

And we should also jointly pledge our energetic efforts both to protect the rights of religious believers among our citizens and to facilitate international contact among them, as the Final Act stipulates.



Our giving of such commitments will be understood around the world as a fresh contribution to the process begun in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Final Act. We all recognize that much of the Final Act depends for its realization on the unilateral actions of each of our states. In the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the initiative and responsibility for action lies very much at home, subject, however, to the type of international accounting we have been seeking in the important review we are conducting at this meeting.

In the United States, the agenda of unfinished human rights business is not fully realized, although we are proud of our overall record. It includes action on ratification of certain international agreements in the field of human rights which President Carter recently signed at the United Nations. It includes programs -- none of them yet perfected, but all of them already solid governmental policy commitments -- to advance the equal rights of minorities and the economic security of all citizens. And, finally, it includes the search for better ways to implement the policy, enshrined in such legislation as our foreign assistance act, of promoting "the increased observance of internationally recognized human rights."

The effort the United States is making is a sincere one. We would hope that other nations would, in the same spirit, examine their conduct to see, by way of illustration, whether the right to religious education is truly fostered, whether believers can freely profess and practice their faith, whether opportunities for free association of believers to worship and celebrate their religion are honored in fact as well as words. It is a fact of life that in some nations of Eastern Europe those conditions do not obtain. This is a matter of grave concern to the United States. One hundred and forty million Americans are identified with protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Moslem, Buddhist and other religious groups of their own choosing. This is safeguarded by the first amendment to our constitution which guarantees the free exercise of religion. Our people share the belief of the poet Tennyson, who once wrote that, "more things are wrought by prayer than man can dream of." We regret the fact that grave violations of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief exist in some of the countries of the East.

Fundamental to the pursuit of human rights is the unfettered expression of divergent and peaceful views. Tomorrow, observing an anniversary of great importance to the promotion of human rights, let us not forget those



who have been unjustly punished simply for expressing what is characterized as dissent. A number of the signatories of this meeting have such prisoners of conscience.

Tomorrow's anniversary is an important occasion to recommit our conference to advance toward the human rights goals of the Final Act. As the Secretary General of the United Nations said in his statement on the occasion of Human Rights Day, "The protection and promotion of human rights is now among our most urgent priorities. Much has been accomplished over the year, but regrettably much still remains to be done. Disturbing violations in various parts of the world contradict the goals and ideals we have proclaimed not only in the Declaration, but in the charter of the United Nations, and they stand as serious barriers in the way of international peace and security."

We have cited specific cases, categories and countries during the review of implementation at this meeting dealing with significant and regrettable aspects of human rights' violations, and President Carter on December 3 in reporting to our CSCE Commission has cited in great detail both the progress and as the Secretary General of the United Nations has pointed out, the "disturbing violations of human rights which occurred and are still all too prevalent in" various parts of the world.



My delegation will make President Carter's report, citing chapter and verse, available to all delegations.

It would be fitting -- in the spirit of the day, and of the obligation the Final Act puts on each participant -- for appropriate authorities to examine again their compliance in light of the Universal Declaration and the Final Act and to take appropriate remedial action. And we have a special obligation in this connection in light of the specific human rights and humanitarian provisions of the Final Act.

We should respond to Secretary General Waldheim's call for "all governments, non-governmental organizations and peoples in every nation to commemorate the historic occasion we mark today by re-dedicating themselves to securing the fundamental freedoms set forth in the Declaration." The Final Act mandates us to do so.

I have suggested some actions our states can take here in Belgrade and elsewhere to give fitting tribute to tomorrow's anniversary. I can only add that lip service is not real observance of human rights. Actions and practices are the true test of a society's commitment to its ideals. As His Excellency, the Honorable Lazar Mojsov, President of the thirty-second session of the General Assembly, said in his remarks commemorating this

occasion: "The oppression of man and nonrespect for human rights have always been negative omens of social unrest and even international conflict. In the interest of peaceful and progressive advancement to a better, more secure and more just world, the human community as a whole must, once and for all, do away with such manifestations which jeopardize fundamental human rights."

In light of the comments made by delegates representing some of the countries of the East, questioning the relationship between human rights and security, the comments by the President of the Assembly and the Secretary General of the UN provide a definitive answer.

As the remarks by Secretary General Waldheim and General Assembly President Mojsov so eloquently point out, peace, security, and human rights are indeed indivisible, and all those who seek detente must recognize that the detente we seek must have a human face if it is to be effective and enduring.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.





DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

February 14, 1978

*Handwritten signature/initials*

Rabbi Alexander Schindler  
Chairman  
Conference of Presidents of Major  
American Jewish Organizations  
515 Park Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

In my last letter I suggested that the most difficult task facing delegates to the Belgrade meeting when discussions resumed on January 17 would be to write a document to conclude the conference. The course of discussions during the past two weeks has proven this to be the case.

As you may know, the agenda for the Belgrade meeting places only one requirement for a final document -- agreement on the date and place for the next CSCE follow-up meeting. Fully aware of the difficulties which might arise in drafting the final document, Western and neutral/non-aligned participants in the CSCE demanded that this requirement be stated explicitly in the agenda. Our purpose was to ensure that if the review of implementation were as frank as we planned, the Soviets and their allies would not attempt to escape similar reviews in the future by denying consensus to proposals for further CSCE meetings. I think the course of discussions during the fall has proven the wisdom of requiring specific mention of the next follow-up meeting. Now, even though the Soviets are chafing under Western criticism in Belgrade, they cannot end the present meeting until they agree to hold another similar gathering two or three years hence.

There are, however, no further requirements for the content of the final document. As discussions developed in November and December, it became clear that the large majority of Western and neutral/non-aligned participants wished the Belgrade meeting to conclude with an objective statement of the experience with implementation of the final act and, if possible with agreement on a limited number of specific proposals to improve implementation and deepen cooperation in the future. Tentative drafts circulating in Belgrade before the Christmas break foresaw a document of this sort.



However, when the conference resumed in January, the Soviet delegation circulated a draft final document which completely ignored these desires. The Soviet draft was limited to general statements on the need to expand cooperation in Europe and continue the process of detente. It touched on a few ideas of special interest to the Soviet Union, but did not deal at all with important issues in the fields of military security, economics and human contacts which had been discussed thoroughly during the review of implementation. Moreover, their paper completely ignores basic human rights issues including the fundamental freedoms enumerated in principle seven of the Final Act.

The Soviet draft has been rejected by all of the non-communist participants as being wholly unsatisfactory. During the past two weeks, conference sessions have been highlighted by continued demands from non-communist countries for a sincere effort on the part of the Soviets and their allies to negotiate, in the words of Ambassador Goldberg, "a concluding document with real political substance, with agreement on specific practical measures to improve the implementation of the Final Act signed at the summit in Helsinki in 1975."

In that same statement, delivered at the plenary session on January 27, 1978, Ambassador Goldberg stressed that the United States delegation was prepared "to stay in Belgrade until we have achieved a substantive document that reflects the wishes not only of all the countries represented here, but of all their peoples as well." Other delegations have expressed similar determination. But, as I noted in my last letter, all decisions at CSCE must be taken by consensus, and the Soviets will be able to block agreement on any document with which they do not agree.

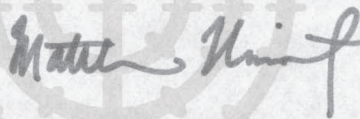
As of this writing, intensive efforts to move the Soviets from their negative position continue. The neutral/non-aligned participants have put forward a compromise proposal which, while not completely satisfactory, offers a basis for negotiation. The United States and the NATO allies have promised to negotiate seriously from this basis. If negotiations do not move forward, the West might put forward a proposal which would demonstrate what sort of result the West hopes to obtain from the meeting.



As pointed out in my last letter, our major goals at Belgrade have not been the negotiation of a new document, but rather to demonstrate that the CSCE process should include a full review of experience with the Final Act. I believe, whatever the content of the final document, this goal has been achieved and that a discussion of important human rights issues is a legitimate part of this process.

Also certain is that the CSCE process will continue with a further follow-up meeting, probably to be held sometime in 1980 in Madrid. This is the date and place for the next meeting preferred by Western countries. Since the Soviets know that they cannot conclude the Belgrade meeting without agreement on the next meeting, their draft concedes to Western wishes on both the date and the place for the next review conference. We look forward to sending you another letter in this series when the Belgrade meeting concludes, giving you our assessment of its accomplishments and shortcomings, and our expectations for the future of the CSCE process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Matthew Nimetz", is written over a faint, large watermark of the State of Israel emblem. The emblem features a menorah and the words "מְנוֹרַת הַשֵּׁנ" (Menorah of the Seven) in Hebrew.

Matthew Nimetz  
Counselor