



STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONCERNS

JCRC 25th Annual Congressional Breakfast
Sunday, February 1, 2004

The Jewish community values the support of the New York Congressional delegation and the many initiatives sponsored by our Representatives and Senators. These measures reflect a deep and abiding commitment to issues of concern to the Jewish community. As we take stock of our mutual concerns and priorities, we ask Congress to take note of these issues, supported by a broad consensus in the Jewish community and considered to be high on its agenda.

ANTI-SEMITISM

The traditional anti-Semitism of the right has fused with a newly militant and vocal Arab/Muslim and leftist anti-Semitism, with some mixing anti-Americanism into this potent witch's brew. This poisonous situation is fomenting a global rise in attacks against Jews, Jewish institutions and Israel. This will require ongoing, focused attention and creative solutions.

When terrorists, linked to Al Qaeda bombed two synagogues in Istanbul on November 15, 2003 the canard that anti-Zionist sentiments should not be equated with anti-Semitism was disproved once and for all. One month earlier, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia told the Tenth Islamic Summit Conference that, "The Muslims will forever be oppressed and dominated by the Europeans and the Jews . . . We are actually very strong. 1.3 billion people cannot be simply wiped out. The Europeans killed 6 million Jews out of 12 million. But today the Jews rule this world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them."

Attacks continue. In France, an arsonist set a Jewish school ablaze in Gagny and an attempted firebombing in Ivry was thwarted. Attitudes are changing. The Eurobarometer poll suggests that Europeans believe that Israel is "the biggest threat to world peace," and the European Union attempts to quash a report documenting anti-Semitism in the Muslim community.

Israel is not merely criticized, but demonized. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King taught us, "When people criticize Zionism, they mean Jews . . . anti-Zionism is inherently anti-Semitic and ever will be so."

No one should equate the situation in America with that abroad, but here, too, there are disturbing signs. In New York we see an increase in hate crimes directed at Jews. A holocaust museum in Terre Haute, Ind., was leveled by arson. The attacker left behind the words "Remember Timmy McVeigh," A jury in Brooklyn refuses to hold the admitted stabber of Yankel Rosenbaum responsible for his death and a new play blames Jews for instigating the Crown Heights riots. Once again, Minister Louis Farrakhan is targeting Jews in his sermons. Anti-Semitism and Israel-bashing have increased dramatically on campuses across the country.

When anti-Semitism rears its ugly head, the danger is not only to Jews—it is an attack on the very fabric and fiber of civil societies everywhere. Abroad, there have been governmental—and non-governmental—responses, often too timid and too few. Educational and legal proposals abound throughout much of the Western world and more are needed. Congress has been sensitive and responsive to this issue. We count on our leaders to continue to stand up and strongly speak out and for the United States to be a light unto the nations.

DOMESTIC

Homeland Security

New York City remains the most symbolic and substantive target for many terrorists and Al Qaeda's leaders have specifically expressed their goal to harm Jews and Jewish institutions. The burden of defending New York has grown beyond merely a municipal responsibility. Federal allocations should appropriately reflect the level of threat. The federal government should also address growing con-

continues on page 3

INTERNATIONAL

Foreign Aid

Congress should help ensure America's role and interests abroad, support humanitarian objectives, and secure peace and democracy by approving the foreign aid budget. This includes economic and military assistance for Israel—a cost effective way to strengthen allies and protect U.S. interests. Foreign aid promotes peace in the Middle East, counters radicalism, and fosters economic stability and securi-

continues on page 2

ty in the region. Israel's current dire economic and security situations demand extraordinary measures. We urge congressional support for assistance which is critical to helping Israel weather the current crisis.

Peace Process

A strong U.S.-Israel relationship is the key to a secure and stable Middle East, which is a major U.S. national security interest. Congress has been in the forefront of reinforcing this relationship. America plays a constructive role in promoting regional peace by calling for an end to Palestinian-initiated violence and terror and by supporting the right and responsibility of the democratically elected government of Israel to determine its own security arrangements. Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians have tried to balance Palestinian political aspirations to self-governance with Israel's security requirements. After rejecting unprecedented and extremely painful concessions offered by the Israelis, Palestinian leaders have orchestrated a campaign of public propaganda and violence without ever offering their own counterproposals for a final settlement. The Administration and Congress should encourage the cessation of incitement, violence and terror, direct bilateral negotiations between Israel and her neighbors, resist imposed solutions, insist on Palestinian implementation of existing agreements, promote full diplomatic relations between Arab and Muslim states and Israel. Moreover, they should urge the elimination of hostile Muslim/Arab rhetoric which has contributed to fomenting worldwide anti-Zionism, rampant anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism. The civilized world must vehemently condemn the hate and incitement in Palestinian schools and censure the negative reporting in the Egyptian, Syrian and Palestinian media. We commend Congress' broad bipartisan passage of the Syria Accountability Act and for congressional solidarity with the people of Israel during all times, particularly during this period of intense difficulty. We support President Bush's historic June 24, 2003 speech in which he clearly outlined a U.S. policy which would recognize a Palestinian state only if there were sweeping reforms within the Palestinian Authority and the election of new leaders "not compromised by terror."

Peace, Security and Strategic Cooperation

We appreciate the commitment of Congress to Israel's military and security needs. Peace and security are indivisible making the pursuit of peace and the practice of violence incompatible. We commend the unshakable determination of the Administration and Congress to help Israel meet its security needs. This includes the support of measures to guarantee Israel's qualitative military advantage and the enhancement of U.S.-Israel strategic cooperation. Israel's qualitative edge becomes more difficult to maintain as the

Iranian nuclear and non-conventional threat grows and threatens Israel's security, regional stability, and American interests. We support congressional initiatives urging strict review of Iran's nuclear and other proliferation activities. The U.S. and Israel have formed a unique strategic partnership to meet the growing dangers in one of the world's most volatile regions. This partnership includes bilateral strategic agreements on military planning, ballistic missile defense and counter-terrorism; joint development of weapons and technologies; intelligence sharing; sharing of vital intelligence on terrorism, weapons proliferation and other threats. Israel serves as a major intelligence provider to the U.S. and is, in effect, its frontline. We appreciate congressional support for continued expansion of this vital strategic relationship.

Security Fence

Due of the failure of the Palestinian Authority to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, Israel has built a predominantly chain-link security fence deployed to block terrorist infiltration into Israeli towns and cities. It is a temporary, moveable measure of self-defense. The security fence does not change the Palestinians' legal status or keep them from going about their lives. Regularly placed openings in the fence exist to ease hardships, take Palestinian humanitarian needs into account, and allow for crossings into urban and commercial centers. The current route of the fence has been determined by security needs and to protect Israeli lives. The fence does not constitute a permanent border, which can only be determined by negotiations. The fence is a proven element in reducing terror, a crucial factor which will open new paths to negotiations. The security fence has become a highly politicized international issue, and has been referred by the United Nations General Assembly to the International Court of Justice. The ICJ is the wrong forum and does not have proper jurisdiction procedurally and substantively to judge this matter. Bringing this issue to the Hague abuses the ICJ, undermines the Security Council, which has already addressed the issue, and encourages the Palestinians to refrain from engaging in direct negotiations with Israel pursuant to the Road Map. While the United States has opposed this referral, we urge Congress and the Administration to exert all efforts to oppose this negative move.

International Terrorism and Arms Control

State supported terrorism and the proliferation of conventional and non-conventional weapons in the hands of recalcitrant states such as Syria and Iran threaten Israel and the free world. Syria continues to provide a haven for international terrorist groups, supports Hezbollah in Lebanon, and stockpiles chemical weapons and missile delivery systems. Iran's continuing efforts to develop nuclear capabilities pose daunting challenges to ensuring a safe world order. We applaud Congress for working to hold Syria accountable for all of these violations. Israel and the U.S. share the frontline of the war on terror. Both nations have the sovereign right to protect

their citizens from violence and terror. 9/11 was a seminal event in underscoring this reality. The JCRC urges the international community to aggressively join the war against terror and proliferation by adopting measures sanctioning individuals, groups, and states which support violence and terror and violate norms governing arms control. The JCRC supports U.S.-Israel cooperation in combating international terrorism and the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. We firmly support joint U.S.-Israel collaboration on research and development of anti-missile technologies to combat these threats.

Support for our troops

We support the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States and their missions to rid the world of terrorism and to encourage democratic institutions to the Middle East. We pray for their welfare and their safe return to their families and loved ones.

United Nations

The cornerstone of peacemaking in the Middle East is direct bilateral negotiations between the parties, without imposed solutions. We oppose all biased anti-Israel and other discriminatory actions in the international body, including resolutions which single out Israel for “excessive use of force” and other one-sided measures. A global campaign to de-legitimize Israel in the United Nations and other international bodies led by many Arab states, along with the Palestinian Authority and Iran—encourages boycotts and ostracization of Israel in other ways. The U.N. must cease to be trivialized by political bias.

Jerusalem

Under Israeli sovereignty, Jerusalem is open to followers of all faiths, with access to all holy places of worship ensured. Jerusalem is the undivided capital of Israel. The JCRC thanks Congress for its efforts to assure that Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, remains united as the capital of the Jewish State. The JCRC reaffirms its endorsement of the Jerusalem Embassy Relocation Act of 1995.

Israeli MIA's and POW's

We support and encourage the efforts of Congress, the Administration and the international community to secure the release of all Israeli soldiers held captive, and to secure information of their whereabouts. In keeping with preserving the sanctity of human life, we value any and every humanitarian intervention on behalf of the missing soldiers, Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Yehuda Katz and Guy Chever.

cerns over the vulnerability of “soft targets” by developing special programs to fund security enhancements and disaster-preparedness planning for faith-based institutions.

Faith-based initiatives

Organizations, rooted in the faith community have played an important role in the provision of social services in America. They should be able to qualify and compete for funding without experiencing discrimination and, at the same time be held to the same standards of service as secular providers. When government funds programs it has the responsibility to ensure that those seeking funded assistance are not proselytized and that all feel welcome at the funded program. We support the prevailing United States Supreme Court decisions that bar the diversion of government aid to directly advance religion.

Religious Freedom

While New York State has enacted such legislation, we urge Congress to adopt the Workplace Religious Freedom Act to require employers to make reasonable accommodations for religious employees unless such action would cause undue hardship in the workplace. The bill introduced in the Senate this session has a record number of sponsors. We hope that this bodes well for its success this year.

Special Education

Through the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act the federal government has played a critical role in the provision of special education and other critical services. Religious school children with special needs are often underserved. We support the current efforts in the House and Senate barring discrimination in the provision of such services and bolstering procedures which would ensure cooperation between public and religious schools so that children get the appropriate services.

Citizenship

Under most circumstances those aspiring to American citizenship should be required to demonstrate both a familiarity with American government and a level of proficiency in English. However some senior citizens—their love for the United States and their wish for citizenship unabated—find themselves unable to learn English. An alternative means of evaluation should be developed for such seniors so that their wish of citizenship can come true.

Charitable Accountability I

Recently, the Senate Finance Committee asked the Internal Revenue Service to turn over the tax and financial records of some

Muslim charities and foundations as part of a widening congressional investigation into alleged ties between tax-exempt organizations and terrorist groups. We believe that Congress ought to support efforts to identify and close any tax-exempt organization that supports terrorism anywhere in the world.

Charitable Accountability II

The Jewish community is also concerned that established and well-meaning foundations insure that their grantees act responsibly. This issue was recently highlighted by news reports of the granting practices of the Ford Foundation. We are pleased that in response to Jewish communal and congressional intervention, the Ford Foundation acknowledged lapses in their oversight and moved to improve its procedures.

We believe that foundations making foreign grants, as tax-exempt institutions, should require that grantees be prohibited from engaging in violence and/or terrorism; be barred from supporting racial, religious, ethnic or other forms of bigotry; or the destruction of any nation-state. Furthermore, grantees should be financially accountable so that foundation grants are not misused. The Ford Foundation has begun a process consistent with these principles. Current statutes seem to provide regulators and Congress with the means to provide adequate oversight. Congress should continue to take its oversight responsibilities seriously.

Compensation for Holocaust Victims

There can never be anything approaching justice for Holocaust victims. However, when property was illegally taken from rightful owners during the war it is as if they are being victimized a second time. As the nations of Central and Eastern Europe enter the Western fold, they should be required to establish mechanisms to compensate communal and private owners or to return such property. Congress should promote such measures of justice.

Energy Independence

International developments in the Middle East and South America illuminate the need for reduction in our dependence on foreign oil is a key national security imperative. We support policies that encourage the effective management of the strategic petroleum reserve, energy diversification and renewable and alternative fuel sources.

UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT THE FOLLOWING LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS.

Increasing authorization and appropriations levels funding transportation programs for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

There is a tremendous increase in the need for transportation services, particularly among the older population. Inadequate

transportation services often results in isolation and a deterioration in health and quality of life for those who can not access alternatives to safe public transportation. Transportation is not only a critical part of the service delivery system but is also essential for older adults to maintain their independence.

The reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century is an excellent opportunity for Congress to improve the availability and accessibility of transportation services for the senior citizens who most depend on them. Section 5310 is funded at \$91 million for the current fiscal year, an amount that is insufficient to meet the needs of the many seniors who must depend on public transportation.

UJA-Federation also strongly supports permitting states to use their Section 5310 allocations to assist with the costs of operating and maintaining vehicles or other capital assets acquired through the program. We have found that for many agencies, a vehicle's operating costs can be prohibitive to acquiring new vans or buses. Lifting this prohibition would help agencies best utilize their funds.

Protecting Refugees Living in the United States

The 1996 welfare legislation limited refugees to 7 years of SSI benefits unless they became naturalized citizens. However, the naturalization process is a lengthy one that can be arduous especially to the elderly or disabled. There are thousands of elderly or disabled refugees who will lose Supplemental Security Income and the often linked Medicaid benefits as well unless Congress acts to remove the post seven year ban.

SSI is the only source of income for most of the individuals confronting the loss of SSI benefits. By definition, these individuals are elderly or disabled, generally unable to work, and most do not qualify for Social Security or other retirement benefits. For the majority of these refugees, loss of SSI and Medicaid will result in severe hardship and poverty.

Other federal programs, including food stamps, no longer link refugee benefit eligibility to the length of time they have resided in the United States. We urge Congress to protect this extremely vulnerable population by removing the time limit on SSI.

Supporting Adequate Funding for the Title XX Social Service Block Grant

Funding for the Social Service Block Grant has been cut by almost \$1 billion since its authorization levels were decimated by the 1998 transportation reauthorization bill. The Social Service Block Grant is an essential source of flexible funding for states delivered through countless agencies that prevent and remedy the neglect and abuse of children and adults provide child care and foster care services as well as various services for the elderly, such as adult day care, Meals on Wheels and other nutrition programs. Many SSBG funded programs have been seminal in the response to emergencies created on September 11th.

Since 1995 annual funding of the SSBG has been reduced from \$2.8 to \$1.7 billion. Federal budget cuts have forced social service providers to discontinue services and reduce benefits for vulnerable families. These dramatic reductions in funding for Title XX have occurred as the demand for these services has risen. We believe that the current shortfall in the State and City budgets will make SSBG funding even more critical over the next few years.

Supporting Incentives to Enhance Charitable Giving

In particular, we are very pleased to note the creation of a charitable tax deduction for non-itemizers and its provision permitting donors to transfer assets held in IRAs directly to a charity, so that they receive a full tax deduction for their gift. Current law requires that funds in IRAs be fully taxed before funds can be transferred to a charity, reducing the amount transferred to the charity and the available tax deduction for the contributor.

UJA-Federation believes the IRA rollover provision would be enormously beneficial in encouraging transfers of wealth to philanthropies by removing the strong disincentives to contributing IRA assets to charities during an individual's lifetime. We expect that passage of the CARE Act would lead to a significant increase in charitable giving.

Extending the Temporary Increase in the Federal Matching Percentage for Medicaid

Last year Congress provided \$10 billion for temporary increases in the Federal Matching Percentage (FMAP) so that States would not have to cut their Medicaid programs to close their budget deficits. This temporary increase will expire June 30, 2004, and we urge an extension in the FMAP increase as states' fiscal crises have not abated.

UJA-Federation also supports increasing the Federal Matching Percentage (FMAP) to rectify inequities in New York's receipt of federal Medicaid funding. We expect that New York's Medicaid expenditures will continue to rise more rapidly than had been anticipated as a result of escalating health care prices as well as the precarious state of the economy. We are very concerned about the provision of services in the Medicaid program as New York State responds to federal budget constraints. Cuts in Medicaid would have drastic effects on the health care of the millions of low-income children, families, elderly and disabled who depend on the program.

Funding Naturally Occurring Retirement Community Supportive Service Programs

Enhancing NORC Supportive Service Programs is a creative and efficient way to provide supportive services that permit the elderly to remain in their homes. NORCs are housing complexes in which people have "aged in place" and want to remain. They are often the result of a young family moving in, raising their children and remaining there as they grow older. This trend results in

concentrated pockets of older people living in residences that do not provide services or the supportive physical environment that many elderly require.

However, taking advantage of this concentration of people, in certain areas UJA-Federation agencies have been able to bring a range of services to NORC residents living independently within the community. Providing preventive health, transportation and nutrition services to NORCs has led to cost saving, efficiencies of scale and an increased quality of life.

Congress appropriated \$3.6 million in 2003 for several communities across the country to participate in a NORC demonstration project. We urge the expansion of this important demonstration program and the establishment of a national grant program for NORCs to make funding opportunities available to community-based providers in all states.

Maintaining Support for Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly

The Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program provides much needed housing for a small portion of this country's older Americans who are eligible to receive it. Section 202 housing provides a secure environment with supportive programs available onsite allowing older people to age in place and permitting frail individuals to remain in their homes and in the community. The average 202 tenant is a frail woman in her mid-seventies living alone on an income of less than \$10,000 per year.

Low funding levels have caused the number of Section 202 units funded annually in the past two and a half decades to decline dramatically, from 20,500 in the late 70s to 6000 most recently, despite the success and the strong demand for this type of housing. Section 202 housing provides older people with the physical security and support they require in order to remain independent and out of more costly institutional care.



70 West 36th Street, Suite 700 , New York, NY 10018
 Phone 212.983.4800, Fax 212.983.4084, info@jcrny.org

EZRA G. LEVIN

President

MATTHEW MARYLES

President-Elect

MICHAEL S. MILLER

Executive Vice President

OFFICERS

Kenneth Brown	Judah Gribetz
Matthew Maryles	Gedale B. Horowitz
Toby Nussbaum	Lester Pollack
Janice Shorenstein	Richard Ravitch
<i>Vice Presidents</i>	Laurence A. Tisch*
Sally Goodgold	Peggy Tishman
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Past Presidents</i>
Charles Temel	George Klein
<i>Treasurer</i>	Rabbi Israel Miller*
Jack D. Weiler *	Daniel Shapiro
<i>Honorary President</i>	<i>Honorary Officers</i>
Martin S. Begun	* deceased
Kenneth J. Bialkin	

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Baer	Bernice Manocherian
Jack Berkowitz	Stanley Nussbaum
Daisy Berman	Alan Posner
Art Beroff	Marlene Post
Abraham Biderman	Fran Reiter
Thomas Blumberg	Allan Rodolitz
Marilyn Butler	Marcella Rosen
David Cornstein	Judith Friedman Rosen
Sylvia Deutsch	Norman Shabot
Ariela Dubler	Judith Shapiro
Alexander Goldin	Lisa Silverstein
Matthew Goldstein	Michael Stoler
Alvin Hellerstein	Richard Stone
Martin Hertz	Howard Teich
Matthew Hiltzik	Esther Treitel
Frances Degen Horowitz	Lilly Wajnberg
Suzanne Denbo Jaffe	Ronald Weiner
Richard Janvey	Louis Weiser**
Carol Kekst	Stephen Wolnek
Dina Leader	
Mark Levenson	**emeritus
Fredric Mack	

**COMMISSION ON
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

Abraham Biderman
Chair
 Fran Reiter
Co-chair

**COMMISSION ON ISRAEL
AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Suzanne Denbo Jaffe
 Richard Janvey
 Mark Levenson
Co-chairs

**JCRC STAFF
FOR THE CONGRESSIONAL BREAKFAST**

Marcy Fishman
Director of Special Projects
 Jennifer Glick
Executive Associate
 Harriet Mandel
Director, Israel & International Concerns
 David Pollock
***Associate Executive Director &
Director, Government Relations***

**THE CONGRESSIONAL BREAKFAST
IS SUPPORTED BY A GRANT FROM
FREDERIC MACK**

THE JCRC IS A BENEFICIARY OF

