

Charlotte Delegation Attends UJA National Young Leadership Conference



Left to right: Marvin Bienstock, Gail Bienstock, Richard Klein, Mel Berzack, Congressman Martin and Paula Klein.

By Richard A. Klein

(Washington, D.C.) Five members of the Charlotte Jewish community attended the third United Jewish Appeal National Young Leadership Conference in Washington, March 14-16. Among the speakers for the conference was Vice President George Bush, who gave unqualified support for Israel.

Those representing Charlotte included Mel Berzack, member of the Charlotte Jewish Federation Board; Marvin Bienstock, Charlotte Jewish Federation Executive Director; Gail Bienstock, Women's Campaign; Paula Klein, president-elect of Temple Israel Sisterhood; and Richard A. Klein, Federation president and member of the National Young Leadership Cabinet.

The three-day event was held at the Washington Hilton, which saw over 2000 young Jewish leaders convene from all areas of the U.S.

Highlighting the conference was the Vice President's address, an introduction to Ambassador Moshe Arens of Israel, seminars on important national issues and listening to such speakers as Senator John Heinz, Senator Gary Hart, UJA President Herschel W. Blumberg, AIPAC President Thomas A. Dine and U.S. Attorney General William French Smith.

The Vice President received an enthusiastic standing ovation for his strong, moving words in support of Israel. He voiced a commitment from the Reagan administration for Israel's future and survival.

Several concurrent panels were held during the conference and leading national figures were also in evidence at those. Senator Howard Metzenbaum spoke out on anti-Semitism. Senator Robert W. Kasten, Jr. was part of a panel outlining a domestic agenda. Senator Carl Levin discussed "Israel: Our Strategic Ally."

One afternoon of the conference was spent on Capitol Hill with all 2000 participants meeting with their congressmen and senators to express concerns involving Jews and Israel. The Charlotte delegation was

well-received by Congressman Jim Martin, who accepted UJA recognition for his vote against the sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia.

Members of the Charlotte delegation also met with an aide to Congressman Stephen Neal of Winston-Salem, who also received UJA recognition for his support for Israel. Congressman Neal was hospitalized at the time of the visit, but his aide expressed the congressman's appreciation.

Representative Martin noted that he would be inclined to strongly oppose any support for the United Nations if any kind of vote advocating Israel's expulsion is considered in that body. The congressman also said he would consider other issues that were discussed, including loans to Israel being converted to grants and the opposition to any arm sales to Jordan.

Following the Capitol Hill meetings, the group assembled for a reception hosted by Senator Rudy Boschwitz and Representative Sidney R. Yates.

Senators Alan Cranston and Bob Packwood were among the honored guests at the conference's Israeli buffet on March 15 at the Hilton. The buffet allowed the group to go from table-to-table to sample typical Israeli food.

I drove to work slowly this morning stopping often to enjoy the radiant blossoms. Thoughts of both Passover and of the Project chased around in my head, and I found myself thinking of the wonders of growth and change.

Of all the seasons and of all our beloved holidays, Spring and Passover are the most characterized by growth and change. It is more than coincidence that our community Project should suddenly surge forward with vitality and strength at just this time of year.

During the cool of fall and the chill of winter, the leaders of our com-

munity have huddled around the conference tables carefully shaping the legal documents which embody the uniqueness of the Project. Now, that work is done and in the hands of the respective boards, soon it will be placed before each and every one of us and we will be asked to give our votes of support to this bold and innovative concept.

With the coming of Spring has come a time to burst out of the confines of our individual houses. Just as our ancestors joined together and surged out of Egypt and into history, so we need opportunities to join together, to grow

together and to celebrate together the joy of our bright future.

Throughout the Spring there will be those opportunities. For the growth of you and your family, make yourselves part of these celebrations. Enter the Afikomen Hunt and thrill to the music of the Klezmerim. And there is more - attend services, make seder, celebrate Shabbat. Then, come to your organizational meetings at the Armstrong House, walk the property, recreate at the JCC. Find your place for change and growth in our community. Our time and yours has come.

- Marvin Bienstock

A Season of Change and Growth

That was followed by Israeli songs and dancing.

Rabbi Harold M. Schuweis was among the concluding speakers who launched an idea for Jewish par-rabbincos to attend the needs of growing Jewish communities. It was an idea that quickly appealed to the Charlotte delegation. Gail Bienstock has accepted a leadership role in Charlotte to see if the community would be receptive to such a plan.

The National Young Leadership Conference was sponsored by the National Young Leadership Cabinet (men) and the National Women's Young Leadership Cabinet, and is held once every two years in Washington.

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