

Get Involved! Sign Up for the Leadership Development Program

The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte has appointed Paul Hirschmann as the incoming Chair of the Leadership Development Program. A graduate of the Leadership Program, Paul brings special motivational and leadership skills. Paul's involvement in the last year has been extensive, ranging from the UJA Single's Mission to a keynote address at the Temple's UJA Shabbat to the UJA Young Leadership Conference in Washington. Paul is energetic and has a strong Jewish commitment.

The fourth Leadership Development Program is entitled "Future Leaders." The emphasis of "Future Leaders" is active

leadership. "I want to ensure that each of the participants of the program will have the opportunity to be actively involved," comments Paul. Paul is also integrating a "reach-out youth" mentoring piece to the program.

An ad hoc committee is being formed to begin planning next year's program. Ken Stern, past chair, will lend his expertise as consultant to the program. The 18-month program will begin in November and run through March 1994. Monthly sessions will be educational, focusing on Jewish contemporary issues, social events, and opportunities for active participation on com-

mittees and Boards. The program will culminate with the exciting and informative UJA Young Leadership Conference in Washington.

"FUTURE LEADERS" REGISTRATION

Are you interested in:

- A social and educational experience?

- Leadership opportunities?

Registration has begun. For further information on the application process, please call Paul Hirschmann, 522-1687 or Pam Appelbaum, 366-5007, Ext. 209. Space is limited! Inquire now!

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Israel Helps Rescue Moldovan Jews

Hundreds of Jews are being bussed out of the war-torn Trans-Dniester region of Moldova—a Soviet successor state—in a rescue operation coordinated by the Jewish Agency and the Joint Distribution Committee. Local Jewish communities in Odessa and Tiraspol, Moldova have also been assisting with evacuation efforts.

In the first wave, 100 Jews went to the Moldovan capital of Kishinev and 280 were taken to Odessa in the Ukraine. Among those Jews evacuated to Odessa, 170 announced that their immediate objective was to make *aliyah*. To date, several dozen Moldovan Jews have arrived in Israel. Additionally, thousands of Jews "are waiting to see if the fighting dies down" before going to Israel, said Jewish Agency spokesman Yehuda Weinraub.

There are approximately 40,000 Jews in Moldova. According to Jewish Agency Chairman Simcha Dinitz, 70% of Moldovan Jews have applied for visas to emigrate to Israel (*Jerusalem Post*, June 28).

Reports indicated that hundreds of people have been killed and hundreds more injured in fighting between the area's Russians and Moldovans. The Trans-Dniester region of 600,000 people is dominated by ethnic Russians and Ukrainians who want to secede from Moldova and its large Romanian majority. They claim they are discriminated against, and are concerned that Moldova will unite with Romania.

As members of a small ethnic minority, it is difficult for the Jews in Moldova to maintain neutrality. "This kind of situation has the potential to become dangerous for Jews, because political forces on both sides of the conflict could force the Jews to choose sides," Nate Geller, who monitors the situation of Jews in the former Soviet Union for the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ), told *NER*.

The Jerusalem Report (July 30) describes the rescue of one Moldovan Jewish family. Simon Vilchik—head of the last Jewish family in the village of Kitskany—took no sides in the conflict, but was literally caught in the middle. Vilchik and his family spent 10 days last month in a cellar waiting to be "buried alive." Loyalist forces had captured the village and were using it as a base for attacks on the separatist strongholds of Tiraspol. Ultimately, after being notified of the Vilchiks' predicament, the Jewish Agency in Kishinev sent a jeep to rescue them.

Heavy fighting continues in Trans-Dniester. According to the NCSJ, three Jewish deaths have been confirmed, including that of a soldier in the Moldovan army killed by gunfire, a member of the separatist militia whose handheld missile exploded during a battle, and a Jewish resident who was crushed by a tank.

"Going to Israel had always been my dream," said Larissa Speier, 17, a Kishinev Jew who

volunteered to help with the evacuation. She had been studying Hebrew for a year in preparation for moving to Israel (*AP*, June 29).

Additionally, a group of Jewish children were evacuated from the Trans-Dniester town of Bendery in Moldova, and will attend a Jewish Agency summer camp. Baruch Gur, head of the Jewish Agency's Russian department, said that teenagers from other areas of conflict such as Tajikistan and Turkmenia would also be given a safe haven in a camp outside Tashkent (*Jerusalem Post*, July 7).

This ongoing rescue of Moldovan Jews comes on top of other recent Israeli operations, including the 1991 airlifts of 15,000 Ethiopian Jews and of the entire Albanian Jewish population to Israel, and the rescue of Jews from the former Yugoslav republics of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

—Reprinted from *Near East Report*.



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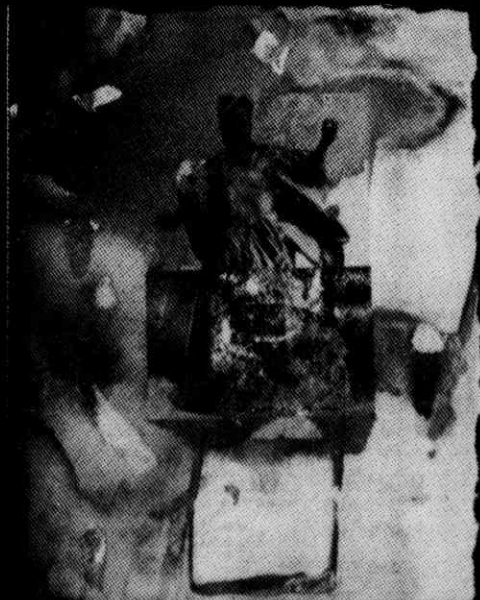
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