

The Charlotte JEWISH news

Vol. 17 No. 4

April 1995

Fifty Years And Counting...



A handmade American flag greeted U.S. troops when they liberated Dachau on April 29, 1945.

'Contract With America': A Red Light For Israel?

By Elmer L. Winter

Largely lost in the highly-publicized "Contract With America" is its potential impact on Israel's future. Beyond the domestic social issues involved, are the implications for sharp cuts in foreign aid, a critical matter in view of the Jewish state's long-time dependence on American largesse.

Although United States grants and loans to Israel appear secure in the short run, the "contract" must be viewed as a red warning light for the future. It should elicit caution and concern among friends of Israel now that the issue of budget-balancing has taken on such immediacy. Every item of expense to be incurred by the U.S. government is now up for Congressional and Administration scrutiny. One straw in the wind is a proposal to sharply reduce the amount of debt relief for Jordan initially requested by the President. In a political environment where fierce debate can be expected over cuts in such hot-button budgetary items as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, could aid to Israel long withstand the axes of Congressional budget cutters?

There is another concern that must be considered: Within the next few years, many of Israel's loyal Congressional supporters will have retired if, as appears likely, term limits for legislators become a reality. Newcomers who are strongly committed to budget balancing may not have the same affinity with the Jewish state as many of Israel's current staunch advocates in Congress. Moreover, Israel's rapidly improving economy may provide a further argument for cuts in aid. And should legislation designed to limit the influence of political action committees -(PACS) be enacted, it would further erode an important incentive for some in Congress to support Israel.

Banking institutions, among the most conservative in the corporate market place, have ignored Israel in the past, but are now racing to get in on the U.S. banking boom underway in the Jewish state. On the heels of the banks are major American accounting organizations that are teaming up with Israeli CPA firms in anticipation of an economic explosion in the Middle East triggered by the peace process.

These sophisticated companies are delivering a message: "We see a bright future for American companies to do business in Israel. We want to become a part of building Israel as a Middle East financial center as we look to the year 2000 and beyond."

Business leaders and economic officials in Israel foresee the need for a high-tech strip extend-

ing from Karmiel to Haifa, down the coast from Haifa to Tel Aviv and up to Jerusalem. This zone would resemble some of the most modern industrial areas in the United States, such as the Research Triangle Park of North Carolina that houses many of American's outstanding high-tech factories

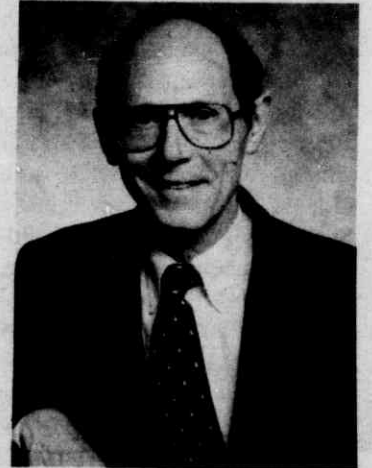
"Israel's rapidly improving economy may provide a further argument for cuts in aid."

and research laboratories. A similar industrial park in Israel combining industry, research facilities, training centers and associated institutions — supported by Israel's superabundance of skilled, highly-trained scientists, engineers and technicians — would attract many foreign companies.

There is always the chance that the red warning light will stop blinking and U.S. aid funds will continue to flow to Israel for the foreseeable future. But Israel is a nation that cannot afford to stake its future on possibilities. If crunch time comes and the U.S. closes its foreign aid door, Israel must be ready to say: "We can now stand on our own feet. Thanks very much for past favors."

The Federation Connection

JEWISH
FEDERATION
OF GREATER CHARLOTTE



Harry Lerner

I would like to thank everyone who gave me the opportunity to be your Federation president for a second time. There have been many more challenges than anyone could have anticipated, but it has been a very rewarding year. I wish there were some way I could convey the excitement that comes with working with the rising young leadership in our community. Their enthusiasm, their dedication and their commitment has made my job look easy; I shall always be grateful for their trust. No matter how difficult our tasks, I came away invigorated and comfortable with the knowledge that our community has carefully chosen its leadership and that we will be well served in the future.

All of us who are engaged in the wonderful enterprise of building our community would encourage more of you to get involved in your Federation, your Temple or

out any in such a brief article. However, when you see your Board members, please tell them how much you appreciate what they have accomplished. Most importantly, all our contributors deserve thanks for their generosity and confidence in our properly allocating their hard earned contributions.

Next month Rich Osborne will assume the role as your President and there could not be a more deserving and capable leader for

*For Ourselves,
For Our Children,
For Israel,
Forever...*

the JCC. The present leadership is bringing a new synergism to these organizations. If you want some very rewarding community involvement, take the time to speak to them and learn how your skills and interests can be utilized. By calling and volunteering your efforts, I am confident you will find your experience as rewarding as I have.

As time consuming as my involvement has been, I could not have succeeded without my family's support. Thanks to my wife Gloria's encouragement, our children, Alexis and Reid continue to excel in school, to compete nationally in their sports, and to make time for their commitment to others. Feeding the homeless at an urban Hillel Center and helping on weekends at Habitat homes have been very enriching and gratifying experiences for them.

I wish to thank the officers and members of our Federation Board for making this such a successful year. There are simply too many accomplishments to try to single

the job. As president-elect he has worked very hard and has been of invaluable assistance to me. I wish to thank him for his support and assistance. As you get to know Rich, I am confident you will appreciate his many strengths and attributes. He and his officers have earned your endorsement and they deserve your support.

Inside the CJN

JFS	4
Organizations	8
Teen News	10
JCC	18
Dining Out	22