1998
ANNUAL REPORT
WITH 1999 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

כַּאֲשֶׁנָּן נַכֵּד נַכֵּד
"ONE PEOPLE, ONE HEART..."
Rashi, Exodus, 19:2
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The painting above and the two paintings below, which are used as background art throughout this report, are interpretations of Jewish themes created by youngsters at JDC-supported programs in St. Petersburg.
In August 1914, Henry Morgenthau Sr., then United States Ambassador to Turkey, cabled Jacob Schiff, the New York philanthropist, asking for $50,000 for the relief of Palestinian Jews caught in the agony of World War I. The money was raised within a month, and shortly thereafter, in November, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee was established to channel funds being raised to aid Jews in Europe and Palestine by the Orthodox Central Committee for the Relief of Jews, the American Jewish Relief Committee, and the People's Relief Committee.

Today, 85 years later, JDC is still serving as the overseas arm of the American Jewish community, sponsoring programs of relief, rescue, and reconstruction, and fulfilling its commitment to the idea that all Jews are responsible for one another and that "To save one person is to save a world" (Mishna, Sanhedrin 4:5).

The number of people aided by JDC since 1914 reaches into the millions. There has been a JDC presence at one time or another in more than 85 countries on every continent. JDC's programs are supported primarily by the UJA Federation campaign of United Jewish Communities (UJC). When men and women contribute to the UJA Federation campaign, they support humanitarian work at home, in Israel, and around the world. JDC also receives funds from World Jewish Relief (WJR, UK), from Canadian Jewry, from the United States government, from charitable foundations and philanthropists, and from other governments and international organizations.

For 85 years, JDC has been working to meet Jewish needs around the globe. In Eastern European countries struggling with vast economic and political changes, JDC today provides life-sustaining assistance to elderly and infirm Holocaust survivors, even as it continues to help young and old renew their Jewish heritage. In the former Soviet Union, JDC is helping to rebuild the Jewish communal infrastructure, revive Jewish traditions, and nourish the quest for Jewish knowledge. It is also providing critically needed aid and helping to establish welfare programs for newly impoverished elderly Jews.

In Africa and Asia, JDC helps small Jewish communities maintain essential services for their elderly and provide their children with a Jewish education. In Latin America and in Western Europe, the emphasis is on community development and technical assistance. In Israel, JDC is helping the country absorb its newest immigrants while continuing to enrich the lives of the disadvantaged and improve the quality of services for children- and teenagers-at-risk, for the elderly, and for the disabled. Through the JDC-International Development Program and the "Open Mailbox" campaigns, JDC also enables the American Jewish community to provide non-sectarian disaster and development assistance worldwide.

JDC today continues to function as a vital instrument of American Jewry, reaching out to Jewish communities in distress and improving the quality of Jewish life around the world.
From the President

The UJA Federation system that is the bedrock of our new national entity, the United Jewish Communities, has always been superb at responding to the great events of twentieth century Jewish history, particularly the founding of the State of Israel and its successive wars of survival. Some have said that these great events are over and gone, but I must disagree. For today, in our lifetime, and on our watch, one of the great events of Jewish history is taking place: the restoration of the three, maybe even four or five million Jews of the former Soviet Union to the Jewish people. Cut off from the Jewish world for over 70 years, they now valiantly seek to return to Jewish life—but they desperately need our help in order to do so.

Our two overseas service organizations have responded to this great event with speed, strength, and competency. Many Jews want to leave the former Soviet Union, and the Jewish Agency is there to make that happen. Already over a million have left, most to Israel, and we believe that half a million more will leave over the next ten years, making this the largest aliya in Israel’s history.

But many Jews want to stay and reconstruct their Jewish lives and Jewish communities, and JDC is there to help make that happen. Most experts agree that more than one and a half million Jews will remain, making the Jews of the former Soviet Union the second largest Jewish community in the Diaspora after the United States, larger than the Jewish communities of France, England, Canada, and Argentina combined. So we now have a dream of major and vibrant new Jewish communities emerging in Moscow, Kiev, St. Petersburg, Odessa, Minsk, and dozens of other localities, and we have enlisted the aid of the American Jewish philanthropic community in making this happen.

Think of what these millions of returning Jews—and their children and grandchildren—will mean to the Jewish people: how many scientists, musicians, philosophers, writers, rabbis, educators, industrialists, and inventors will enrich our people and indeed the entire world.

With the support of United Jewish Communities, major foundations, and philanthropists, JDC is able to respond to this great opportunity in Jewish history—to take up the challenge of Jewish renewal in the former Soviet Union with a massive and focused program. Together, we are already changing the history of our times at the millennium, but we are only part of the way to our goals in the former Soviet Union, and it will take another 10 to 20 years to complete the job. And bear in mind that it is a job that we are expert at, having helped to restore vibrant Jewish communities in Western Europe after the Second World War.

Achieving lasting Jewish renewal in the former Soviet Union is not just a dream whose potential remains untested. Over the past decade, American Jewry, through JDC, has invested tens of millions of dollars in this effort. And the thousands upon thousands of Jews who have seized upon JDC programs and thereby found their way back to our people are a testament to its effectiveness.

Yet, despite the achievements, this is no time for complacency. The forces of assimilation grow stronger each day, and alongside the many Jews in the former Soviet Union who have started to explore what Judaism holds for them, stand too many others who remain untouched by Jewish community life.

To remedy this, JDC has embarked on a plan to substantially expand and strengthen the network of Jewish community centers it has helped to establish throughout the former Soviet Union. Unlike JCCs here in the US, or those in Israel that JDC helped create, JCCs in the former Soviet Union serve not as complements to communities already in place, but as the very kernel around which a Jewish community can grow.

The JCCs opened to date in the former Soviet Union are proving to be incubators of Jewish communal life, enabling Jews living in a given locality to come together and build their own lasting, self-sustaining communities in the way that they see fit. Aptly called “Jewish Homes,” these JCCs are providing the variety of activities needed to draw Jews back, one at a time, to Jewish life—reaching out to the disconnected Jew with the particular spark that will re-ignite that particular Jewish soul.

The model is proven. JDC has the qualities and experience to do the job right. We have already begun to implement this new initiative with funds currently available for this purpose, but it will take an additional financial commitment from American Jewry for this program to reach its full dramatic potential.
We work with a feeling of urgency, knowing how much is at stake and how little time is left to battle against the corrosive effects of 70 years of forced assimilation. But we work with the confidence that American Jewry will not fail to take up one of the greatest Jewish renewal challenges in our people's history—and certainly the greatest overseas humanitarian task of our generation.

The UJA Federation system that has been the framework for the organized American Jewish community to date has provided us with the unity and collectivity we needed to respond to all the great events of our day. I know that the Federations, through their ownership of the new United Jewish Communities, will care for and treasure this unity and collective capability.

The overseas vantage point that JDC provides has underlined for me—as it no doubt has for the many Federation leaders who are active members of the JDC Board—the fact that Jews everywhere look to the Jewish community of the United States for leadership and for protection. They too depend upon our unity and our collective capability—for these are the key ingredients that permit us to be a great force in responding to the great events of Jewish history in our own day.

I know that the dedicated members of the JDC Board, who spend untold hours and travel countless miles on JDC's behalf, will continue to articulate this message in their home communities, led by JDC's Chairman, its other past Presidents, and its outstanding Committee Chairs. The generous commitments that many of our Board members have made to JDC's endowment program and their supplemental gifts in support of particular country programs are concrete evidence of their abiding commitment to meeting Jewish needs overseas.

As we stand on the threshold of the new millennium, I would like to say that we at JDC will continue to do all the things that we have done for the past 85 years for as long as our funders want us to—and for as long as there are needs. I am confident that the United Jewish Communities will continue the great partnership which brought together the unique generosity of American Jewish contributors, the amazing organization and dedication of the North American Federations, the persistence of the United Jewish Appeal, and the competence and professional expertise of the JDC.

Together, we will continue to make Jewish history, and I believe that historians will look favorably upon us and upon what we did on our watch. They will say that we learned one of the lessons of the Holocaust well and that it guided our actions, for we understood that "No Jew is safe unless all Jews are safe." Even more important, we will leave behind a Jewish world that is strong and safe for our own children and grandchildren—and what better legacy can we leave them than that?
During the past year, JDC’s major emphasis was placed on Jewish renewal in the former Soviet Union—where the cultural survival of a major segment of world Jewry hangs in the balance; on the hunger relief program for the former Soviet Union’s impoverished, elderly Jews; on the situation in Ethiopia; on rescue and relief activities in the Balkans; and on ASHALIM, the unique partnership we have forged with UJA-Federation of New York and the Israeli government to help children and teenagers who are at-risk.

As you will see in the body of this report, much progress was made last year in many of those programs, from the launching of the all-out effort for Jewish renewal in the former Soviet Union that JDC’s President has so eloquently described, to JDC’s success in reaching out and providing welfare assistance to some 175,000 elderly Jews in need throughout that vast region. We continue to support elderly Holocaust survivors in Central and Eastern Europe, and we are seeing our efforts to revitalize Jewish communities there achieve new milestones on the road to eventual self-sufficiency.

JDC continues to assist all streams of Judaism in areas that touch on our worldwide operations, in keeping with our traditional emphasis on pluralism and on non-partisanship.

In North Africa and Asia, JDC is helping small Jewish communities to maintain essential communal services. We capped a decade of Jewish programming efforts in India this past February with the dedication of a long-sought Jewish community center in Bombay. The technical assistance, leadership training, and community development efforts we maintain in Western Europe and Latin America have taken new twists in this computer age, helping to link Jewish communities and Jewish leaders in ever greater numbers.

The situation in Ethiopia has been a troublesome one for many years. The Felas Mora, Jews who converted to Christianity, have moved from their villages, abandoning their self-sufficient, agrarian lifestyle and transforming themselves into urban slum dwellers. There is controversy in our community and in Israel as to their eligibility for aliyah. JDC does not determine who is eligible for aliyah; that is the responsibility of the Israeli government. Nor is JDC responsible for any matters relating to emigration.

However, JDC has been urging the Israeli government not to categorize the entire Felas Mora population as being ineligible for aliyah, but to assess each family’s eligibility on a case by case basis according to the Law of Return.

In the meantime, JDC is providing emergency health and nutrition programs in Addis and Gondar. At some point in the future, should a substantial population of those deemed ineligible remain behind, some assistance may be required to facilitate their resettlement in agricultural areas of Ethiopia.

Preparedness has always been a key aspect of JDC’s modus operandi; its value was demonstrated anew early in 1999 as concern mounted for the well-being of the small Jewish communities caught in the eye of the gathering storm in the Balkans. But well before the Kosovo crisis ignited, JDC had been working with those communities, sending in ample supplies and helping them to plan courses of action to deal with various contingencies.

As tensions escalated and NATO air strikes began, the crisis committee established earlier by the Belgrade Jewish community with JDC’s support set up temporary shelters in the synagogue and community building, and special relief payments were made to help the poorest and most vulnerable Jews. All of the resources sent in by JDC prior to the crisis were devoted to the emergency, including a large supply of pharmaceuticals that was made available to the Belgrade community for distribution to both Jews and non-Jews. In Kosovo, too, food supplies and medications were already in place; JDC staff carefully monitored the situation of Kosovo’s small number of Jews and helped evacuate some to safer areas. Indeed, JDC country directors from throughout the region spent most of their Passover holiday working with local Jewish communities, setting up accommodations in neighboring countries for possible evacuees.

For the first time in half a century, a Central European Jewish community took the lead in helping to rescue a neighboring Jewish community in distress. Just before Passover, Budapest community leaders joined with their Belgrade counterparts to put in motion evacuation plans for women, children, and the elderly that had been formulated months before. With the logistical help and
financial support of JDC and the Jewish Agency, some 500 Jews from Belgrade and other parts of Yugoslavia passed through Budapest during the weeks of crisis, many of whom quickly went on to Israel and other destinations.

A substantial number—about 130 to 150 Jews—were in Budapest through most of the bombing, cared for by JDC and the Hungarian Jewish community. The members of the Budapest Jewish community opened their hearts and the doors of their institutions to help give these evacuees a semblance of normal life—from hastily putting together a Passover seder to opening Jewish schools and recreational activities to the children and pensioners' clubs to the elderly.

Once again, World Jewish Relief (WJR, UK) joined JDC as a partner in funding these rescue and relief efforts, and other British organizations stepped in to cover various needs through their donations to the European Council of Jewish Communities' Emergency Fund. While lamenting the human anguish and tragedies of the past six months, we can take some comfort from the knowledge that JDC has made fair progress in its decade-long effort to help rebuild the Jewish communities of Central and Eastern Europe and encourage the development of trans-national communal ties throughout the Continent.

The humanitarian aid effort mounted by JDC in Albania and Macedonia on behalf of the 42-member Jewish Coalition for Kosovo Relief and Assistance is indicative of another facet of JDC operations. Through JDC-IDP and our Open Mailboxes, we have been providing the American Jewish community with the means to respond quickly and effectively to both natural and man-made disasters, utilizing our long-standing ties with other international service organizations active in the field. The plight of the Kosovar refugees struck a particular chord in the Jewish psyche, and the response was unprecedented, with over $4.5 million contributed to date to the JDC Mailbox.

I urge you to read the JDC-IDP section of this report for details of what was accomplished as we helped Israel and other overseas Jewish communities establish a distinctive Jewish presence in the relief effort. In keeping with JDC's usual practice, we began developing plans for longer-term rehabilitation efforts even while responding to acute, immediate needs. Over the coming months, we will be implementing these reconstruction projects in Kosovo itself, having recently opened an office in Pristina. With the local authorities, we have just opened two schools, one in Pristina and one in Prizren, and UNICEF has asked JDC to repair and ready 12 other schools.

In this effort, as in all JDC-IDP programs, we have worked closely with Israeli government agencies and non-governmental organizations, building on the strong ties we have established through our own programs in Israel.
The following table summarizes JDC’s annual budget (provided primarily by the United Jewish Appeal, now United Jewish Communities) and the extent to which matching funds from various sources have been obtained and utilized. In sum, the JDC budget of $66.5 million has leveraged another $103 million for total expenditures on JDC projects of over $169 million during 1998.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>JDC DIRECT EXPENSES</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM PARTNERS</th>
<th>TOTAL EXPENSES</th>
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TOTAL                         | $66,460,400        | $102,969,777               | $169,430,177   |
INTRODUCTION

While Israel at 51 is undoubtedly a success story—a tale of remarkable achievements—a widening gap between its “have” and “have-not” population groups means that entire communities are being left behind, isolated from the Israeli mainstream. Child abuse is rising. The number of frail elderly is increasing. Thousands of immigrants, particularly those from Ethiopia, are struggling to adapt to Israel’s modern society, and their children are straining to make their way in school.

The scope and complexity of the problems facing this still-young nation mean that government social services are often hard put to keep pace with regular demands, leaving little opportunity to pursue the innovative and flexible solutions required to help those in greatest need.

That is where JDC comes in: working on behalf of American Jewry, it is helping Israel find new and better ways to aid its most vulnerable citizens. How does it do this? First, by identifying and understanding Israel’s most critical social problems. Then, by developing the kernel of a countrywide solution—a model program initiated in partnership with national and local government agencies and non-profit organizations. Together, JDC and its partners test the solution’s effectiveness on a small scale. Once it is proven, JDC gradually pulls out, helping its partners to take over and expand the pilot program and make it an integral part of the network of social services.

Since the effectiveness of any program depends on the abilities of the people who run it, JDC also invests in helping Israel’s social service professionals improve their expertise. And JDC works to strengthen the country’s voluntary sector, encouraging Israelis to accept shared responsibility for addressing the nation’s social concerns and fostering their willingness to step in and help when the government cannot.

KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE

Child abuse is a worldwide concern from which no society is immune. In Israel, some 16,000 children are known to suffer physical, sexual, or emotional abuse each year, and this figure is climbing. Over the last decade, JDC has helped put this problem high on the public agenda, with the result that government and non-profit agencies are now addressing the issue.
PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

- Cutting edge: JDC addresses the most difficult issues challenging Israel's social fabric.

- Non-political: As an American organization, JDC is never drawn into Israel’s political fray.

- Partnership: Because it is apolitical, JDC is seen as an honest broker and welcomed as a partner in tackling social challenges by national ministries, local authorities, voluntary associations, and the private sector.

- In-and-out: JDC-Israel always works with partners who take over and continue successful programs. It itself does not operate any programs on a long-term basis.

- Nationwide, long-term impact: However, because JDC’s partners go on to implement these model programs wherever they can help, the solutions JDC develops do have a long-term, nationwide impact.

- Leverage: The $20.5 million JDC invested in Israel in 1998 leveraged an additional $63.5 million from its partners, yielding a total program budget of $84 million.

- Sharing: JDC shares its wide expertise in addressing social challenges with communities in Israel, the Diaspora, and the non-Jewish world.

JDC represents American Jewry in a partnership with the people of Israel to build a better and more just Jewish state.

ISRAEL

Total population: 6.0 million
Jewish population: 4.8 million
JDC appropriation: $20,543,800

JDC'S CURRENT FOCUS IN ISRAEL

- Protection of children and teens.
- Care for the elderly.
- Aid for absorption of olim.
- Research and development of social services.
- Promotion of philanthropy and voluntarism.
- Project management for donors.

The well-being of Israel’s children is a primary JDC-Israel concern.

Photo: Roy Mittelman
A major step forward was made in 1998 with the establishment of ASHALIM, a professional and financial partnership of JDC, the Israeli government, and—in a first-of-its-kind relationship—UJA-Federation of New York. By marshaling energies and pooling resources and expertise, ASHALIM aims to cut through the bureaucracy and accelerate the creation of desperately needed new services for children- and youth-at-risk.

Indeed, enhanced organizational cooperation is already taking place on both local and national levels. Building on the Haifa and Beersheba models, a comprehensive community approach to planning services for children-at-risk was initiated in Ashdod and Kiryat Gat in 1998. ASHALIM is also strengthening the emphasis on prevention and early detection. Working with parents believed likely to abuse their children, or those who have already done so, it is finding ways to treat problems before they reach the stage at which children must be removed from the home.

One innovative program helps residents of battered women’s shelters strengthen their parenting skills and adapt to single parenthood, while another targets parents who fail to bring their babies to Well Baby Clinics—almost always a sign of neglect. Haifa’s Early Childhood Center for Arab children works with expectant parents who seem likely to have difficulty caring for their children.

To improve detection, ASHALIM developed and distributes training material to help hospital emergency room staff identify abuse, and it provides similar kits to teachers, doctors, police officers, and other professionals who may come in contact with abused children. It has also developed a special course for therapists treating the children of drug addicts.

ASHALIM emphasizes working with the family as a whole whenever possible. Haifa’s model Parent-Child Center, developed with support from the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, combines preventive and therapeutic programs under one roof. In partnership with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and with support from Sylvia Hassenfeld of New York, Ellen Block of Chicago, and the Minneapolis Federation, similar centers will be established in the coming year in three to four other locations. ASHALIM is also creating a network of supervised visitation centers for children and parents who have been separated by divorce.

In cases where removing children from the home is the only safe alternative, ASHALIM works to make residential facilities as supportive and nurturing as possible. Its model community-based facility, the “Thanks to Scandinavia” Home in Lod—supported by the Rashi Foundation, the Sperling Estate, the Mortimer J. Harrison Trusts, and UJA-Federation of New York—has opened a new unit and can now accommodate up to 48 children. This innovative facility keeps children out of harm’s way while enabling them to remain in their regular schools and in contact with their extended families, and it provides intensive therapy for each family as a whole. ASHALIM is opening two similar homes in Jerusalem and Ashdod in 1999.

Eight community homes, which provide family-like residential settings for small groups of children, are currently being operated with JDC support by Or Shalom Children’s Homes. Two of them were opened this past year—one in Holon, which was purchased with support from UJA-Federation of Greenwich, and one in Haifa. ASHALIM has also developed model programs to address the relationship between children in residential care and their parents, with the aim of facilitating the child’s return home if at all feasible.

For children in the greatest danger, JDC has established four regional emergency centers for abused children to provide immediate care until long-term solutions can be found. Assisted by
a multi-year grant from the United Jewish Federation of San Diego County, the Beersheba center recently moved into permanent quarters. 

**ASHALIM** is currently working to establish an additional center to serve ultra-Orthodox children, whose placement in regular centers complicates their treatment.

Jerusalem's Schusterman Center for Children and Families recently hosted a visiting delegation from Tulsa's Parent-Child Center in an effort to promote the exchange of professional knowledge between Israel and the United States. The Center also enjoys generous support from Tobee and Leonard Kaplan of Greensboro, NC, and the Straus Foundation.

The Maurice Messing Professional Resource Wing at the Jerusalem Center was made possible by Susi Schletter-Messing as part of her profound commitment to protecting the well-being of Israel's children.

Professional exchange is also central to the UJA-Federation of New York's role in **ASHALIM**; its professionals have made critical contributions at every stage of the organization's development. In October 1998, a delegation of senior professionals from **ASHALIM**, JDC-Brookdale, and Israeli government agencies visited New York to discuss early childhood programs, while 10 social service professionals from the New York area paid a reciprocal visit to Israel in November.

JDC-Israel continues to help the nation's education system address the needs of underachievers and potential dropouts. Innovative education and counseling programs for teenage dropouts have been developed with the Youth Protection Authority, along with a training program for counselors. JDC is also helping to establish a network of counseling centers for both Israeli-born and immigrant youth.

**NEE**—the New Educational Environment—JDC's pioneering intervention program, helps teachers and principals create more flexible, individualized learning environments which encourage students to stay in school. The program is operating today in 60 schools—including three in the Arab sector—in partnership with the Ministry of Education and other agencies and with support from the Guttman Foundation. NEEs are currently being adapted for use in elementary and junior high schools, and the program is being expanded further with assistance from the United Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh.

NEEs grew out of JDC's pioneering **Mifne** program, first established in 1988 to return dropouts to school or work. In 1999, support from the National Lottery will enable six new **Mifne** centers to be opened in conjunction with the Ministry of Education.

**BRINGING IMMIGRANTS INTO THE MAINSTREAM**

Jews from Ethiopia and from the former Soviet Union's Caucasus region have found the absorption process particularly daunting, and JDC is committed to helping them become fully integrated members of Israeli society.

Education is a major priority; too often, academic results in these communities do not match the youngsters' potential. Cultural differences are often mistaken for inability, and these same differences may prevent parents from taking an active role in the education process. Since few tots in these communities attend preschool, most are already at a disadvantage when they begin first grade, a disadvantage that may continue to hamper them throughout their school years.

Recognizing the magnitude of the educational challenges facing Israelis of Ethiopian origin, JDC in 1997 initiated the Coalition for the Advancement of Ethiopian Education. Over the past year, the Coalition has grown into a broad-based, 45-member
partnership of government ministries, foundations, and non-profit organizations. It provides an unprecedented forum in which the educational establishment and the Ethiopian community can focus on the unique needs of Ethiopian-Israeli children.

The Coalition's concerted approach and its ability to pool resources from member organizations in both Israel and the United States have enabled it to implement a Ten-City Plan for improving educational achievement among Ethiopian-Israeli children in the cities and towns where over 60 percent of this population group resides.

Generous funding for various Coalition initiatives has been provided by UJA-Federation of New York, Henry and Edith Everett and Al and Gail Engelberg of New York, Edythe Roland-Grodnick of MetroWest, NJ, Myra and Robert Kraft of Boston, Lou Ann and Joe Kellman of Chicago, the Minneapolis Federation for Jewish Service, Nate Shapiro of Chicago, Larry and Leonore Zusman of Dayton, Barney Gottstein of Anchorage, the United Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, the Goldman Fund, Judd Malkin of Chicago, the Helen Bader Foundation, the Baron De Hirsch Fund, Ron Harris of Greenwich, Lou Hoodwin of Michigan City, IN, the MADAV Foundation, and Leslie Bernstein-Armstrong of New York.

Acknowledging the importance of preschool learning, JDC joined forces in 1998 with the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland in a bold initiative—the Coalition's largest to date—to provide effective education to each and every Ethiopian preschooler in Beersheba, home to the largest Ethiopian community. SHAHAM, a program begun in that city the previous year, uses National Service volunteers to help Ethiopian families. The Ministry of Education supported SHAHAM's replication in Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Malachi in 1998, with expansion to two additional localities set for this year. In another initiative, special enrichment centers for Ethiopian preschoolers and their parents have been established in Rehovot and Kiryat Yam.

JDC, together with the Israel Association of Community Centers and with support from the Helen Bader Foundation, has also developed a program—now operating in five locations—that prepares five-year-olds from the Caucasus community for first grade. An afternoon tutoring program aids 800 of this community's high school students in 11 localities, while JDC-trained educational mediators from the community itself are helping to strengthen cooperation among students, teachers, and parents.

Specially adapted versions of the New Educational Environment have been introduced in three schools with large numbers of Ethiopian students and in two others with significant numbers of students from the Caucasus. The aim is to make teachers more aware of their students' cultural backgrounds and how these might affect their studies.

For adult members of all immigrant groups, achieving economic self-sufficiency is the key to entry into mainstream society, and JDC maintains a number of programs—from vocational training to help in starting-up small businesses—to help them secure decent salaries and fulfilling jobs. By 2000, one such initiative, which enables engineers from the former Soviet Union to upgrade their skills for the Israeli job market, will have assisted 1,250 engineers now working in 60 companies.

A variety of training programs focus on women. JDC developed special career advancement programs for professional women from the former Soviet Union. It also helps immigrant women with few qualifications—many of them from Ethiopia, Bukhara, and the Caucasus—gain the skills needed to find permanent employment, and it offers vocational training for young Ethiopian women who have completed army service.

Since small businesses and self-employment are attractive job alternatives for many immigrants, JDC has developed entrepreneurship courses to teach olim how to operate small businesses and how to market themselves effectively in Israel. Special programs developed for immigrants from Ethiopia, the Caucasus, and Syria include courses for single mothers having particular difficulty finding work and for immigrants close to retirement.
Health education for new immigrants remains an important focus. Ethiopian counselors have been trained to mediate between patients and medical personnel and to provide community members with information on women's health issues, family planning, and communicable diseases, while Ethiopian case managers provide support to HIV carriers. In conjunction with the Falk Institute for Mental Health, JDC has developed special tools to assist mental health professionals in treating members of the Ethiopian community.

To help Ethiopian-Israelis become active advocates for their community, JDC has been operating the Aleh empowerment program in ten localities. A similar program has been developed specifically for Ethiopian women in conjunction with the Israel Women's Network, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, and Women to Women. JDC has also been encouraging community activism among immigrants from the Caucasus, 20 of whom are currently studying at the prestigious College for Leadership Development.

JDC supports a weekly television program in Amharic and in a variety of ways encourages the preservation of immigrant groups' cultural traditions. It seeks to help each community claim its place within Israel's cultural mosaic and to prevent a generation gap from forming between immigrant parents and their Israeli-born children.

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

JDC's efforts to make the disabled part of mainstream Israeli life included the establishment last year, in partnership with Shekel, of the Israel Center for Accessibility, while the eight cities in its Accessible Cities Initiative worked to increase access to all public facilities. Generous support from Larry and Leonore Zusman of Dayton has put Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter among the sites now open to visitors in wheelchairs; the Hebrew University, Ammunition Hill, and the Zippori excavations will hopefully soon follow. JDC is also working with the Israel Hotels Association to introduce special technology for hearing-impaired guests.

To help secure jobs for those with mental and physical disabilities, a master plan for employment for the disabled has been prepared in conjunction with key government agencies. While six new sheltered workshops provided jobs for an additional 300 people in 1998, JDC encourages the disabled to seek employment in the open job market if possible. At JDC's initiative, the Israel Manufacturers' Association is matching job candidates with potential employers, and 14 people have graduated from a JDC-sponsored entrepreneurship course for the deaf.

Another segment of the population helped by JDC are Druse and Arab women, who face difficulties both as members of a minority group and as women living in male-dominated communities. A program for Druse and Arab widows, which was initiated in the Galilee village of Maghar, empowers those who have often been socially and economically marginalized, while a vocational program for teenage girls likely to drop out of school is currently operating in three other villages.

JDC initiated special training courses last year for Israel's ultra-Orthodox, about half of whom live in poverty. Over 850 men are enrolled in computer and electronics courses, while courses for women—who are often the family breadwinners—are taking them beyond the overcrowded teaching field to new career opportunities in computers, bookkeeping, and dental technology. The 20-course program, equally divided between men and women, has proved so successful that it is now being expanded under government auspices.

AGING WITH DIGNITY

The elderly are among Israel's fastest growing population groups. This is due in part to the
US state senators learned about small businesses run by new immigrants in Hadera on their December 1998 visit to Israel. Photo: Roy Mittelman

nation's life expectancy rate—78.4 years, the sixth highest in the world—and to the addition of some 90,000 elderly immigrants from the former Soviet Union, many of whom are in poor health.

JDC continues to play a leading role in planning and developing services for the elderly through JDC-ESHEL, a partnership with the government that pools the resources of all major government, public, and private organizations in the field. JDC-ESHEL's success in bringing about a fundamental shift from institutional care to community-based services is the most striking example of its nationwide impact.

JDC-ESHEL's goal is to help seniors stay active, independent, and involved in the community as much as possible, thereby minimizing the need for expensive residential care. Its community-based services are run by local voluntary associations for the elderly, some 120 of which it has helped establish.

Over 140 day care centers provide the elderly with the services they need to continue living at home. Fifteen centers—some new, some expanded—were completed in 1998, and 40, including six in Arab communities, are currently in different stages of planning and construction. Four centers implemented special programs last year for elderly immigrants from Ethiopia, while two others introduced programs for those from the Caucasus.

The Supportive Communities program, JDC-ESHEL's innovative housing solution, enables seniors with minimal needs to remain in their own apartments by providing help with errands and home repairs, emergency alarm systems, and various social activities. Thirty such communities have already been set up in cities, towns, and rural regions, and more are planned with assistance from the Ben N. Teitel Charitable Trust and the Joseph and Dorothy Goldberg Trust.

To expand all-important social contact among independent seniors, 1998 saw the adoption by JDC-ESHEL of a welfare initiative developed and implemented with much success in the former Soviet Union, the Bayit Cham or Warm Home program. Already implemented in five locations, the Israel program's initial focus has been on elderly immigrants from the former Soviet Union, who are regularly hosted by immigrant families from the same region.

With support from UJA-Federation of New York, JDC-ESHEL continues to develop health promotion programs for seniors encouraging good nutrition, the proper use of medications, exercise, and other aspects of healthy living. Its publications supplement these efforts, helping to educate seniors and the public on subjects like safety in the home, coping with memory loss, and seniors' legal rights. Some 350 elderly volunteers were involved last year in furthering health education among their peers through the Stay Well program, which operated in nine locations, including two added in 1998.

In partnership with New York's Metropolitan Jewish Health System, JDC-ESHEL in 1998 established Gerontech (The Israel Center for Applied Technology and Aging) to develop assistive devices for the elderly for commercial sale. JDC-ESHEL has also initiated programs which give older citizens the opportunity to earn needed extra income and remain productive members of society; 16 new programs were implemented last year for 500 additional beneficiaries. A workshop center, at which seniors will offer goods and services to the general public, will open in Carmiel in 1999.

For some of the elderly, however, institutional care is still essential. JDC-ESHEL developed a new model home for the aged incorporating—within the same institution—beds for independent and for frail elderly, as well as for those requiring nursing care. In 1998, two new homes for the aged were completed, including one in Jerusalem's Katamon neighborhood which was funded with help from the Jerusalem Foundation, the Jerusalem municipality, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims
Against Germany, the National Insurance Institute, and Idan (The Jerusalem Association for the Elderly). A new home in Carmiel is in the final planning stage, and a home for Alzheimer's patients is under construction in Ramat Gan.

JDC-ESHEL is also working to improve the quality of life in existing homes through nutrition programs and occupational therapy activities. An innovative pet therapy program currently operates in ten homes and will be expanded to six more in 1999. Quality care is promoted through a comprehensive program of in-service training for social workers, doctors, nurses, and occupational therapists. Some 50 courses for 2,500 participants were held this past year, including in-depth programs for directors of day care centers and old age homes. A program to train geriatric specialists, established in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, currently has 54 participants, most of them doctors from the former Soviet Union.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, the National Insurance Institute, and the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation are critical partners in JDC’s efforts to provide quality care for Israel’s elderly. Generous funding for specific programs has been provided by Joseph Glickman of La Jolla, the Joseph Meyerhoff Family Charitable Trusts, Adele Becker of New York, and the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County.

JDC-ESHEL marked Israel's 50th anniversary in 1998 by hosting a gathering for some of the country's more than 400 centenarians. The event attracted widespread attention and enhanced the public's understanding of the idea that longevity and quality of life can indeed go hand in hand.

BETTER SERVICES, GREATER RESOURCES

To help make the services provided by national and local governments and non-profit groups as effective as possible, JDC-ELKA, a consortium of the national government and JDC-Israel, operates senior-level management training programs which have increased efficiency and cooperation both within and among public and voluntary sector agencies.

In 1998, a program was developed for senior Ministry of Health officials and hospital administrators dealing with the ramifications of recent health service reforms; another program for Ministry of Education staff, school principals, and directors of municipal education departments focused on the implications of decentralization within Israel’s education system. A unique program was created for directors of municipal welfare departments—mostly social workers by training—to help them manage their complex service networks.

JDC-ELKA has also been working to strengthen the effectiveness of local governments in delivering human services. The Lyn P. Meyerhoff 21st Century Forum for Mayors helps elected leaders upgrade their professional skills. Established in 1994, the forum is a partnership of JDC-ELKA, Sikkuy (The Association for the Advancement of Equal Opportunities) and the Lyn P. Meyerhoff Foundation. In 1998, the Municipal Planning Unit (MPU) program gave 42 local authorities the comprehensive long-term planning capabilities they need. Initiated by JDC in 1984, the program's operating costs are now borne by the municipalities and the Interior Ministry, with JDC providing technical and management assistance.

As part of JDC-ELKA's efforts to breach the "glass ceiling" that can block women's professional advancement, task forces in the Jerusalem, Haifa, and Holon municipalities, in the Ministry of Education, and in the Army's Adjucancy Corps have all been exploring ways to utilize women employees more effectively.
To maintain JDC-ELKA's impact on service quality, ongoing contact among its 1,400 graduates is actively encouraged. Graduates held their fourth annual conference in 1998, while a quarterly magazine and a new Internet site provide forums for exchanging ideas. The Doron Foundation is supporting additional JDC-ELKA program efforts.

JDC-ELKA is also providing training for Israelis with a commitment to community activism. In conjunction with the Jewish Agency, it is training lay leaders in all Partnership 2000 regions to work alongside their counterparts overseas. In 1998, a pilot program was implemented in the central Galilee together with the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit: the Israeli and American leaders maintain regular contact and have developed several joint projects that are expected to benefit communities on both sides of the partnership.

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DEPARTMENT—YEHUDIM

JDC's support for religious institutions in Europe and Israel dates back to its founding, 85 years ago. JDC currently supports the growth of vocational yeshivas, which combine Jewish studies with the acquisition of employable skills, thus taking families off Israel's welfare rolls as parents become productive citizens. In recent years, JDC spurred a breakthrough in special needs education in the yeshiva world, helping to establish ten institutions for children with learning disabilities. JDC also helps yeshivot organize cooperative buying of food and services, which has been yielding annual savings of $1 million.

JDC BROOKDALE INSTITUTE

The JDC-Brookdale Institute is Israel's, and the world's, leading Jewish center for applied research on aging, health policy, and social welfare. Its primary objective is to improve social service practice and policy by introducing more effective planning and evaluation, and it cooperates actively with JDC-Israel, JDC-ESHEL, and ASHALIM. A partnership between JDC and the Government, the Institute works closely with government ministries to ensure that its program is relevant to national priorities. The Institute provides a unique forum for the examination by
Jewish lay leaders and government officials of critical social issues in Israel and in Jewish communities around the world. It continued to expand its work with Diaspora Jewish communities in 1998, with a special emphasis on the evaluation of JDC programs in the former Soviet Union.

**AGING**

The Institute has provided expert assistance to various national reform efforts in this area. Most recently, it has been serving as the professional arm of a national committee appointed by the Prime Minister to address the merits of raising the age of retirement and equalizing it for men and women.

At JDC's request, the Institute, in cooperation with the William Rosenwald Institute for Communal and Welfare Workers in St. Petersburg, is evaluating the *Hesed* centers, the unique community welfare programs developed for elderly Jews in the former Soviet Union. In partnership with other Jewish organizations, the Institute organized a conference on aging in the Jewish world, which was held in conjunction with the November 1998 World Council of Jewish Communal Service Quadrennial. Together with JDC-ESHEL, it has developed cooperative programs with Jewish Federations in Baltimore, Chicago, and Pittsburgh, and it is currently evaluating the organization of services for the elderly for the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County.

**HEALTH POLICY**

The adequacy of the health care available to Israel's disadvantaged population groups is a major focus of the Institute's work. In 1998, the Institute completed the first-ever national survey of dental care, examining the financial barriers to treatment and the public's awareness of oral health. Access to dental care is particularly problematic for low-income families since the costs are not covered by national health insurance.

The Institute is currently evaluating an intervention program initiated by Israel's largest HMO and JDC-Israel, with support from the Engelberg Foundation, that works with health care professionals and Ethiopian immigrants to overcome cultural barriers and promote healthful behavior. In its efforts to help the health care system deal with ever-tightening resources, the Institute is examining the feasibility of community-based alternatives to emergency room and hospital care.

**IMMIGRANT ABSORPTION**

Major studies of immigrant youth completed at the end of 1998 are serving as the basis for new efforts to overcome the many difficulties involved in ensuring their successful integration into Israeli society. Conducted with support from the Grodnick family of MetroWest, NJ, the Institute's study of Ethiopian youth has significantly changed existing perceptions of their progress and problems; the findings have been broadly disseminated to educators and policymakers. Two other studies addressed the problems of immigrant youth from the former Soviet Union and the special difficulties facing those from the Caucasus region.
The studies attracted widespread interest, and an interministerial seminar was held in December to discuss their implications. The findings have prompted the establishment of a special interministerial committee on immigrant youth, with the institute serving as professional advisor.

The institute’s research highlighted the need to expand Ethiopian children’s access to early childhood education. With support from Edythe Roland-Grodnick of MetroWest, NJ and Carol Auerbach of Philadelphia, and in cooperation with the Cleveland Federation and JDC-Israel, the institute has launched several projects focusing on the development of early childhood programs.

**Disability**

This is a period of rapid change and reform in services for the disabled in Israel. The institute is playing a major role in this process, in particular by providing information that can serve as the basis for national planning efforts. To assist the government in planning services and revising disability benefits for children, the Institute recently completed a comprehensive study of the needs of disabled children in both Jewish and Arab communities; a parallel study of disabled adults has already been initiated.

The National Information Center on the Disabled, created with support from the Berman family of Detroit, has issued its first report; the data is being used to facilitate the implementation of a new equal opportunity law for the disabled. A new multi-year grant from the Berman family will make it possible to expand the focus on disabled children in the years ahead.

To improve coordination in providing services to the disabled in the community, a special study is being conducted in cooperation with the Bader Foundation. The Institute is also playing a key role in the design and evaluation of a major national initiative to provide services for the chronically mentally ill.

**The Center for Children and Youth**

The Center’s research focuses on promoting opportunities for Arab and Jewish youngsters, especially those who are disadvantaged or at-risk. The national plan recently adopted to improve the care of neglected and abused children grew out of the Center’s earlier research; the Center is currently involved in promoting the plan’s effective implementation and drawing lessons for the future.

The Center, as a participant in a World Health Organization study of youth, has been monitoring the well-being of Israeli youth and the development of critical problems like youth violence. The study has now been expanded to include Arab youth in Israel and in the Palestinian Authority. The Center is also helping the Nazareth municipality develop a comprehensive plan for services for Arab youth that can serve as a model for other localities.

Israel has a particularly high number of children-at-risk who have had to be placed in residential care. In cooperation with JDC-ELKA, the Center has developed a regulatory system for residential facilities which is being implemented nationwide to prevent abuse and promote more effective care.

The Center’s previous research provided the database for the establishment of ASHALIM, the new consortium that is promoting opportunities for children-at-risk. The Center is now addressing ASHALIM’s ongoing planning and evaluation needs.
The Center for Social Policy Studies (CSPS) is an independent, non-partisan research institute funded primarily by JDC which identifies and brings strategic social developments to the attention of Israeli policymakers and the general public.

CSPS' small core staff is augmented by 16 experts in various disciplines who hold senior positions in the public and private sectors and take on periodic Center assignments. Working in area-related teams, they prepare in-depth analyses and policy papers; these become the subject of debate in CSPS' public forums, which are attended by Cabinet ministers, Knesset members, and top academics.

The Center has come to occupy an influential position in the social policy arena. Its comprehensive analysis of the government's social services budget, published annually, is a valued tool in the Knesset's yearly budget debate. And members of both the government and the opposition rely on CSPS for accurate analyses and policy options in the areas of education, health, personal welfare, and economic policy. The Center works with international institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Brookings Institution.

A joint project with the Brookings Institution comparing social pluralism in Israel, the US, and Australia was a highlight of the Center's 1998 program. The study will result in a major publication and two international conferences, one in Washington and the other in Jerusalem, with the aim of developing policies to enhance equality in each country.

With rises in unemployment and interest rates, a slowdown in economic growth, and a flattening of the domestic economy pointing to more serious social problems ahead, the Center has begun a special economic policy initiative. A CSPS team headed by a leading macro-economist is developing an overall plan to help produce the economic expansion needed to improve the position of Israel's "have-not" population groups and alleviate social distress.
During 70 years of Communist rule in the Soviet Union, attempts at forced assimilation, outbreaks of overt anti-Semitism and discrimination, and the slaughter of 70 percent of the Jewish population in the Holocaust devastated Jewish life. And yet, over 30 years ago, the Jews of the Soviet Union demonstrated the resilience of their spirit and the strength of their Jewish identity when a courageous few sought to practice their religion and culture and to demand the freedom to return to their historic homeland, Israel.

Ten years ago, in far larger numbers, the Jews of the collapsing Soviet Union began to reclaim their heritage and teach it to their children, to develop communities and care for the weak and needy among them.

Since those early days of Jewish rebirth, JDC has encouraged and nurtured the development of Jewish life in towns and villages throughout the former Soviet Union, teaching those Jews who have chosen to become involved how to build community life: how to develop organizations, how to provide opportunities for formal and informal Jewish education for all ages, how to reach out to the uninvolved. For ten years, JDC has been helping activists acquire the tools to become community leaders, teaching them how to craft a vision of community life and translate it into reality. At the same time, it has provided critical welfare support for the needy elderly, many of whom have become increasingly impoverished, isolated, and vulnerable.

The seeds JDC has nurtured have borne fruit in ways barely imaginable ten short years ago. But if one theme suffuses the manifold activities that JDC has supported and encouraged since it was allowed to return to the Soviet Union in October 1988, it is the dramatic strengthening of a homegrown leadership. To delineate JDC’s efforts over the past decade is to tell the story of the increasing empowerment of a Jewish community that, with one-tenth of the global Jewish population, is still the third largest in the world.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Nothing exemplifies this empowerment better than the OFEK program, which is supported by the Joseph Meyerhoff Family Charitable Trusts. OFEK, the Hebrew word for Horizons, is the Russian acronym for Community Festival of Jewish Books.
JDC regards immigration to Israel as the best option for ensuring that the Jews of the former Soviet Union do not assimilate. However, the many Jews who will remain for the foreseeable future need dynamic community organizations to facilitate the revival of Jewish life, reach out effectively to the uninvolved, and care for the needy. Through 16 offices and 25 full-time emissaries, JDC today is helping Jews in 11 countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and seeks to:

- Promote Jewish knowledge, values, and identity in a spirit of religious pluralism and with a commitment to Zionist principles.
- Encourage the development of a local leadership that springs from and truly represents the Jews of the former Soviet Union.
- Facilitate the development of self-sufficient and independent Jewish communities.

Delivering JDC food packages: Board member Robert S. Reitman with an elderly Jewish welfare recipient in Tbilisi, Georgia. Photo: Scott Richman

JDC'S OPERATING PRINCIPLES:

- Forge partnerships with all sections of the community and with the various international bodies that are providing help to the Jewish population.
- Remain impartial and non-partisan.
- Avoid interference in local affairs.

THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

Jewish Population

1989 Soviet census: 1.5 million
Current estimates: 1-2 million
(although some estimates place the figure as high as 4 million)

JDC Appropriation: $18,154,500

In addition to the 1998 program budget, this total includes funds allocated by JDC last year for the Special Hunger Relief Program, property reclamation, and the RIT program. RIT is the designation for activities initiated in the aftermath of World War II to bring vitally needed support to Jews in Eastern Europe. These funds are now being used primarily in the former Soviet Union.

COUNTRIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (CIS):

ARMENIA  AZERBAIJAN
BELARUS  GEORGIA
KAZAKHSTAN  KYRGYZSTAN
MOLDOVA  RUSSIAN FEDERATION
TADJIKISTAN  TURKMENISTAN
UKRAINE  UZBEKISTAN
The premier OFEK festival in 1997 was the former Soviet Union’s first all-encompassing Jewish community event; 31 cities took part, mounting exhibitions of books accompanied by cultural programs that appealed to all ages. By encouraging cooperation among the various Jewish organizations, the local events helped to strengthen community spirit, and they succeeded in attracting Jews who till then had been unaffected by the communal renascence.

The second festival, in the fall of 1998, was held in 49 communities, including two major centers of Jewish life that had not participated the previous year—Moscow, where over 3,000 people attended the local events, and Kiev, where 4,000 took part. JDC held a preparatory seminar to help the communities plan their activities, yet in every sense the festivals were organized by the communities themselves. In Moscow particularly, the degree of cooperation displayed by that city’s many Jewish organizations was noteworthy.

Though events varied from town to town, Israel’s 50th anniversary was the central theme. Some of the larger communities held academic conferences and round-table discussions in cooperation with national libraries and museums, while the smaller ones tended to give their festivals a rich cultural flavor with artistic performances and tours of Jewish sites.

An estimated 25,000 to 30,000 Jews and non-Jews visited the exhibitions, which, in the bigger towns, included locally published works on Jewish themes. In addition to strengthening Jewish communal identity, the festivals did much to further relations with the non-Jewish community. As one non-Jewish visitor remarked, “Bravo. This is how the Jewish people has survived!”

Local empowerment is also evident in the way communities are handling the matter of property reclamation. JDC’s success in raising the communities’ awareness of their right to reclaim confiscated properties has led a growing number to take the initiative in this area. They now turn to JDC only for advice on how to restore and use the returned properties to benefit the entire community—by making them, for example, into Jewish community centers.

Because of their vital role in rebuilding communal life, Jewish community centers (JCCs) are the focus of a major new JDC effort, initiated this year, to raise additional funds for Jewish renewal in the former Soviet Union from North American Jewish Federations. The strategy document outlining the project notes that “JCCs represent the very kernel around which a community can grow... (offering) emerging communities the means to shape their communal life in the way they see fit.” These communal development efforts are being supported in St. Petersburg by the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, in Kharkov and Minsk by UJA-Federation of New York, and in Moscow by the Fred and Rita Richman Foundation.

JDC’s family seminars program is another community development activity that has taken root and is flourishing; its residential format helps families experience Judaism together in an informal setting. The two pilot summer seminars first held in 1996 grew to 17 last summer and attracted 1,200 participants ranging in age from two to 90. JDC trained the seminars’ leaders, provided some of the funding, and sent an educator to help out, but the seminars were put together and run by local community activists themselves.

The seminar in Samara, organized in cooperation with the local Maccabi club, was a bit different. In addition to bringing together 110 local children and their parents, the seminar included 30 kindergarten teachers who had come from 12 other towns to take part in JDC’s annual teacher training program. The teachers all brought their children; this gave the youngsters a special vacation opportunity and helped their parents appreciate more fully the benefits of a family-oriented, informal educational setting.

JDC is helping to make these family seminars a year-round activity; in five cities, groups of 10 to 15
families regularly get together to celebrate Jewish holidays and life cycle events. Some of the groups are drawn from participants in the summer seminars, while others are composed of families involved in Jewish kindergartens, day, and Sunday schools.

Over 1,200 children in 15 towns are currently enrolled in 29 Jewish kindergartens. These were established with JDC support and guidance, and JDC provides ongoing training for their staffs. The kindergartens provide the youngsters with a positive Jewish early childhood experience, while giving their families an opportunity to learn more about Jewish traditions. JDC also supplies educational materials and guidance to the 55 Jewish day schools and 225 Sunday schools that now exist throughout the former Soviet Union, with a total student enrollment of about 21,000. Since 1993, it has shipped over 240,000 textbooks to these schools, along with multi-media Sunday school kits that are continually updated.

The 153 Judaica libraries that JDC has established in 104 towns provide both children and adults with a framework for informal Jewish learning. Over the past decade, JDC has supplied the libraries with over 730,000 books, 6,000 of them in 1998 alone. With special funding from the Joseph Meyerhoff Family Charitable Trusts, a strong supporter of these libraries, JDC's Sha'at Sipur (Story Time) program, which encourages children to read Jewish books, was introduced in one of St. Petersburg’s Jewish day schools last year. In a fine example of local initiative, the school librarian is now working to involve the city’s other Jewish schools in this project.

Another local initiative resulted in the creation last year of an umbrella association for the People’s Universities, which offer lectures on Jewish subjects by members of the community and local academics. Two new universities were established in 1998, one in Donetsk and the other in Kharkov, bringing to 10 the total number of these informal institutions. Although they provided over 2,500 Jews in 1998 with a valuable opportunity to learn about their heritage, the shortage of lecturers with a sufficiently deep knowledge of Jewish topics has been a constant stumbling block. One of the umbrella group’s first projects, therefore, is to widen the pool of qualified teachers by recruiting some of the 6,000 graduates of courses offered in the former Soviet Union by Israel’s Open University—the material for which was translated with JDC support seven years ago.

Advances in informal adult education are paralleled by the growth in academic opportunities to
Turning Friday night into Shabbat at the Hillel Center in Kishinev, Moldova.

Photo: Roy Mittelman

teach and study Jewish topics. The central address for this is Sefer (Book), the JDC-supported Moscow affiliate of the Jerusalem-based International Center for the University Teaching of Jewish Civilization. Since its creation in 1994, Sefer has succeeded beyond all expectations, becoming a true community of scholars of Jewish studies. And given the high esteem accorded academics in the former Soviet Union, this reconnection to Judaism gives pride to Jews. It also sends a powerful message to the wider public.

Over 400 academics, 25 percent more than in 1997, took part last year in Sefer's fifth annual conference, and most of the papers were delivered by local scholars. A high point was the formal presentation of The Reader of Biblical Studies. Published in Moscow with JDC support, this Russian-language volume returns the Bible to the Jewish context from which it was entirely removed in the Soviet period.

The creation of the Chais Center for Jewish Studies at the prestigious Moscow State University (MGU), a joint project of MGU and Hebrew University, is a milestone in the revival of Jewish studies and a glowing example of what can be achieved when individuals, scholars, and a wide range of institutions join hands to make a vision a reality. The Center has a staff of local lecturers and a visiting staff of Hebrew University professors and graduate students that includes emigres from the former Soviet Union. Thanks to Stanley Chais' commitment to this project and financial support and the help of the Russian Jewish Congress, the Israeli government, and JDC, Jewish studies are now an integral part of academic life at one of Russia's elite institutions.

The 17-city network of Hillel centers now flourishing throughout the former Soviet Union has become an all-important source of future Jewish leaders. A partnership effort of JDC, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, and Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, with support from the Steinhardt Family Foundation, the centers provide university students, many of whom grew up unaware they were Jewish, with a framework in which they can examine their identity and meet other Jews.

The students' growing eagerness to reestablish their connection to Judaism was clearly demonstrated by their enthusiastic participation in the special student High Holiday services held last fall in 18 communities. In Moscow, for example, where 60 students attended these services two years ago, more than 1,300 packed the hall rented for the occasion in 1998.

To encourage students to become involved in the wider community, the Hillel centers place special emphasis on the Pesach project, in which students are trained to lead communal Passover seders. In the course of three years, the number of students involved in this project increased from 60 to 600. Some students were taught the necessary skills and knowledge at a central pre-Passover seminar; many others were taught by their peers at 13 regional seminars before fanning out last year to hold 300 seders and related holiday activities, which reached some 18,000 people in 165 towns.

**LEADERSHIP EMPOWERMENT**

JDC is acutely aware that to empower local communities, one needs local leaders who have the vision and skills to help their communities flourish. JDC's efforts to cultivate and train local leadership are aided by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County, and the Rich Foundation.

Two major obstacles hamper this process. The first is the legacy of the all-knowing and all-powerful Soviet state, which actively repressed individual initiative. The second is emigration, which frequently deprives communities of their most promising young leaders. The latter is likely to remain a problem even if the return of political and economic stability brings about an overall decline in emigration.
The Buncher Leadership Program for Jewish Communities is a critical part of JDC's efforts to nurture community leaders. Some 200 lay and professional leaders have participated in this intensive, Israel-based program since 1991, with a growing number now coming from the smaller towns. Since 1993, the Melton Program for Senior Educators from the former Soviet Union, sponsored by JDC in cooperation with Hebrew University's Melton Center for Jewish Education, has held eight training courses in Israel for a total of 70 participants. A pilot leadership training project in St. Petersburg is currently using graduates of both these programs to hone the skills of new community activists.

The leaders and staff of community welfare organizations are trained at the William Rosenwald Institute for Communal and Welfare Workers in St. Petersburg, the beneficiary of major support from the William Rosenwald Family Fund, the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, and the Minneapolis Jewish Federation. To date, over 4,200 people have been trained to set up and implement welfare services based on Jewish values.

More and more of the courses are now being taught by Institute graduates, and many have been tailored to address specific organizational needs, like the requirements of small welfare organizations. The most extensive course is for agency directors; five such courses have now been completed, bringing the number of locally trained directors to 120. Here, too, emigration means that new people must constantly be trained, particularly in light of the increased need for welfare services.

SOCIAL SERVICES

JDC now provides welfare assistance to 175,000 elderly Jews throughout the former Soviet Union. These are the community's weakest and most vulnerable members, and they have been hit hardest by the parlous state of the successor states' economies. Pensions are inadequate even for basic needs, a situation exacerbated by frequent delays in payments. And many of these elderly Jews have no families to turn to for support: over 40 percent of them are childless, while another 40 percent have children living too far away to help. Thus, in addition to the severity of the elderly's financial problems—which often mean they do not have enough to eat, cannot afford to buy medication, and are unable to heat their homes in winter—many of them suffer greatly from chronic loneliness.

Many Hesed centers provide assistive devices to the elderly and disabled—like the cane being assembled here by this community volunteer. Photo: Roy Mittelman

The economic crisis that rocked the former Soviet Union last summer aggravated the situation. Currency devaluations put more elderly people in need of support, while whatever help may previously have been available from family members was seriously reduced as the purchasing power of the younger generations diminished.

Geographic realities further complicate the plight of the Jewish elderly and the challenge of alleviating their suffering. While about half of those in need live in the major cities, the other half are scattered in 1,000 smaller urban or rural locations where they may constitute as much as 80 percent of the local Jewish population. Many of these localities are difficult to reach, are frequently cut off in winter, and suffer from erratic food supplies.

For over five years, JDC has been working to meet the elderly's needs through a network of welfare organizations, called Hasadim, which were intentionally designed to serve as fundamental community-building tools. (Hasadim is the plural of Hesed, the Hebrew word for charitable acts.) By encouraging the entire community to become involved in caring for the needy in keeping with traditional Jewish values, the Hasadim have become a force for reviving communal identity. Between 1993, when the prototype Hesed Avraham and Sonia Rochlin was set up in
Scenes from Jewish community life in the former Soviet Union last fall (clockwise from top): Community workers try out a new physical aid for the disabled; studying the offerings at the Jewish book festival; a puppet-making workshop keeps these seniors busy; hard at work at a Jewish day school; food distribution program at the Kishinev Hesed.

St. Petersburg with expert aid from Israel's Yad Sarah, and the end of 1998, 98 Hasadim were established across the length and breadth of the former Soviet Union. 35 of them in the past year alone.

Indeed, since the very beginning of JDC’s hunger relief program, the Abraham and Sonia Rochlin Foundation, together with the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, have served as outstanding role models for others to follow. We owe these two foundations an immense debt of gratitude.

By the beginning of 1999, the Hasadim had succeeded in identifying and reaching out to 175,000 needy Jewish elderly in 1,035 locations with food packages, meals-on-wheels, hot meals, medical consultations, medicines and medical equipment, and home care. During the course of 1998, more than 648,000 food packages were distributed. 1,249,800 meals-on-wheels were delivered to 7,400 homebound, more than 1.8 million hot meals were served to 13,600 people, and 1,200,000 home care visits were made to 14,600 clients.

Loneliness and social isolation are combated by the Bayit Cham (Warm Home) program, which has been generously supported by Harriet Zimmerman of Palm Beach. Small groups of elderly meet regularly in a host apartment or in the central social clubs recently opened in the larger Hasadim. The program is expanded for Jewish holidays to involve a larger number of elderly in home-based communal celebrations, often under the guidance of students from the local Hillel center. In 1998, some 5,800 people met in 385 homes and shared over 164,500 meals through this program, while nearly 95,000 people took part in various Hesed-based social and cultural activities, including clubs, day centers, and Shabbat and holiday celebrations.

In rural regions, nine Hesed-mobiles—fully-equipped vans, one of which was donated by Ronne M. Hess of Birmingham—now travel from village to village, reaching out to Jewish populations that may number no more than one or two individuals with material support—food packages, medicines, warm clothing, and blankets—and the clear message that they have not been forgotten.

The entire network of social services is funded by JDC, the North American Federations’ Special Hunger Relief Program, and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, with major support from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and World Jewish Relief (UK).
In 1998, the Abraham and Sonia Rochlin Foundation responded to increasing economic hardship by funding welfare assistance for elderly Jews in the Central Russia/Volga region, including food packages, hot meals, home care, and Hesed-on-wheels.

Additional support for the social service network is provided by the Mortimer J. Harrison Trusts in conjunction with the United Jewish Federation of MetroWest, NJ; the Chais Family Foundation through the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles; the Jewish Federation of Central Jersey; the Baltimore Jewish Council, an agency of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore; the Koret Foundation; Ed Merrin through UJA-Federation of New York; Tim Wulliger through the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland; and the United Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh.

While the Hasadim today are directed and staffed by local professionals trained at the Rosenwald Institute, they rely heavily on volunteers, some 6,000 of whom currently give of their time and skills throughout the former Soviet Union. Jewish schoolchildren visit the elderly and help with food package deliveries; university students run holiday programs and bring a "Jewish word" to Bayit Cham groups; Jewish doctors give freely of their time and medical skills. This, in no small measure, is the secret of the Hasadim's success. For it makes them not merely social service delivery agencies, but vehicles for Jewish renewal and an integral part of the development of a fully-rounded Jewish life in the former Soviet Union.

Test scores have just been posted at this Jewish day school—and one student couldn't be happier with the results! Photo: Roy Mittelman

TIME IS SHORT AND THE WORK IS GREAT

The achievements and developments of the past year and the wider structure of Jewish community life that has been rebuilt over the last decade constitute an impressive and deeply moving portrait of a community that has survived 70 years of Communist anti-Semitism to be reborn.

Yet despite what has been achieved, there is no room for complacency. While JDC's welfare network is now reaching most of the Jews who have been identified as needing help, and its infrastructure is capable of reaching out to even more, a shortage of funds precludes any widening of services. And while the opportunities exist for Jews to learn about their history and religion and reconnect with their heritage, barely 15 percent of the estimated Jewish population of the former Soviet Union is now active in Jewish communal life. The rest, anywhere from 850,000 to over three million people, are simply individuals for whom being Jewish has yet to acquire any real meaning.

The forces of assimilation grow stronger each day, and without increased outreach efforts, like those embodied in JDC's new strategic plan for Jewish renewal in the former Soviet Union, too many Jewish children in the years ahead will not know what it means to be Jewish—nor will they even know to ask.
On the threshold of the twenty-first century, the Jewish communities of Western and Eastern Europe are coming together as never before, drawing from each other's strengths as they lay plans for reshaping and refining their communal institutions to meet the challenges of a new millennium.

The first-ever European General Assembly (GA), which was held in May 1999 in Nice, France, epitomized these efforts; the participants—500 leaders from 37 countries—represented European Jewish communities from Ireland eastward to Siberia. Taking aim at Jewish life in 21st century Europe, workshops and discussion sessions covered the full range of communal endeavors, from social services to educational and cultural activities and special programs for children, youth, and families. The European Association of Jewish Community Centers, established with JDC's help late in 1997 to bring together newly developed JCCs from East and West, held its second Congress in Nice in conjunction with the GA, to take advantage of the ferment of activity there. That was just what the GA's organizers had in mind as they strove to facilitate a renascence of European Jewish creativity that could be the harbinger of a new golden age.

JDC's Community Development Program in Europe, which works in partnership with local communities and pan-European organizations, has been helping to further these communal planning and restructuring efforts by strengthening the networking process, promoting the development and interchange of new initiatives and technical expertise, providing new training opportunities for lay and professional leaders, and furnishing professional assistance to communities that request such help.
JDC's involvement in Europe today focuses on Community Development, while it continues to maintain relief programs for Holocaust survivors in Central and Eastern Europe.

JDC employs an integral approach to Community Development, looking at each community as an intertwined system of organizations, structures, and population groups. In helping individual communities engaged in the process of restructuring, JDC's goal is the development of a full Jewish community life through programs that address the needs of different age groups and institutions. Efforts continue to build a more pluralistic environment.

JDC provides technical assistance in the areas of leadership training, strategic planning, networking and interchange, and the development of new initiatives to reach out to different age groups within the Jewish population.

JDC promotes mutual assistance by linking communities and working with the European Council and other pan-European Jewish bodies to address regional issues. It has also been helping Eastern European Jewish communities benefit from the resources and experience of the Western European countries.

In the Baltic countries and Kaliningrad, JDC's commitment to Relief and Community Development ranges from social welfare programs for the elderly to the cultural, religious, educational, and social activities involved in rebuilding Jewish communal life.

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**EUROPE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**SPAIN**

THE BALTIC COUNTRIES

JDC Appropriation: $1,197,400

**TRANSMIGRANTS**

JDC Appropriation: $210,300

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**EUROPE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

LEADERSHIP TRAINING
COMMUNITY PLANNING
NETWORKING
WEST-EAST INTERCHANGE

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An arts and crafts project at a Jewish Sunday school: JDC provides technical support for a wide range of Jewish educational programs. Photo: Roy Mittelman
Currently celebrating its tenth anniversary year, this unique, Israel-based training program for Jewish leaders is a critical part of JDC’s community development efforts. Established in 1989 as a partnership of the Buncher Family Foundation, the United Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh, and JDC, the Buncher program has trained over 300 lay and professional leaders from Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, the Baltic Countries, India, and Latin America. More than 80 percent of those who completed their training currently hold key lay or professional positions in their respective communities.

The addition of foreign-language-speaking instructors has enabled the program to reach the full range of Jewish leaders in a given country, not just the English-speaking activists. Thus, in comparison to the two or three leaders from each country involved in the program in its early years, there were 12 to 15 participants in the groups from the former Soviet Union, Hungary, India, and Poland that took part last year in program seminars in Israel or in follow-up sessions and alumni events at home. The current year will see new groups from these countries, from Latin America and the Baltics, and a first-ever group from Bulgaria—nearly 100 participants in all.

An encounter between Buncher graduates from around the world and the program sponsors highlighted the tenth anniversary celebration held in Pittsburgh this past May. The creation of an international alumni association with its own publications, directory, and Web site has paved the way for an ongoing exchange of information among Buncher graduates. The Pincus Fund has provided added support this year for this alumni program, which was established three years ago with additional funds from the Buncher Family Foundation. In addition to follow-up sessions and professional support in the local communities, master seminars, leadership labs, and inter-group discussions are among the new activities for program graduates initiated in 1999.

In addition to its regular programs, three “firsts” marked LEATID Europe’s fourth year of operation in 1998. In partnership with JDC, it organized the first meeting of a select group of senior communal leaders from the US, Israel, Europe, and Latin America; operating as a global Jewish think tank, they focused on devising new Jewish community models for the 21st century. Another joint venture attracted 23 leaders from 14 countries to Barcelona last June for the first seminar ever held in Europe on the design and management of Jewish programming for adults. In addition, the first “training the trainers” course was successfully completed, resulting in a much-needed expansion of the LEATID faculty.

In the intensive learning environment provided by LEATID, Jewish leaders, both lay and professional, can acquire new management skills, exchange information, devise solutions to common problems, and strengthen their Jewish knowledge. LEATID’s founding consortium includes JDC, the European Council of Jewish Communities, World Jewish Relief (UK), the World ORT Union, and France’s Fonds Social Juif Unifie. By the end of 1998, some 385 participants—representing 45 Jewish communities and 29 countries—had benefited from LEATID’s programs.

The Venice Top Leaders’ Seminar has become a regular winter event. The Leaders XXI program for lay leaders aged 30 to 50 had its first French-speaking group last year, and a group of 14 senior professionals from Western and Eastern Europe is due to complete the Executives XXI program in 1999, following hard on the heels of a 17-member group who took part in training sessions last year.
The European Council and JDC are partners in community development, with ECJC the organizing force, with JDC's collaboration, behind this year's first European GA (see above). Fifty-six communities and organizations in 34 countries are currently represented on the European Council. In addition to co-sponsoring LEATID and the regional programs described below, ECJC promotes the exchange of information and programming ideas through conferences and consultations, a community databank, and The Link: its regular fax/e-mail bulletin, while its European Emergency Fund can assist communities in distress.

**Regional Programs Bring Jewish Communities Together**

The Central European and the Mediterranean regions have become the most active of the regional programs which JDC has helped to develop; over the past year they have organized special events or activities nearly every month for different segments of the Jewish population. University students, educators, teenagers, singles, and directors of programs for the elderly are among the beneficiaries of these programming efforts, which have provided both community members and professionals with the opportunity to network and exchange ideas and experiences with their fellow Jews.

These regional programs link communities in neighboring countries which have a common geographic, cultural, and historic base. They were developed in association with ECJC and the local communities as a way of putting together the critical mass needed to create a richer Jewish life that would have greater appeal to the younger generations.

The Mediterranean Region includes Jewish communities in the south of France, Spain, Italy, Greece, and Morocco, while the Central European Region includes Northern Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Croatia. A third region covers Northern Europe (see The Baltic Countries, below), while a fourth links communities in Southeastern Europe, including those in Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia, Romania, Moldova, and Ukraine.

**The Internet Provides New Electronic Links**

Both lay and professional community leaders have been making good use of the Internet, visiting Jewish Web sites to exchange ideas and program information or seek professional advice. A “chat room” established last year by Yahad, a network for young adults, is now in full swing, putting Jewish young people in “virtual” contact with each other throughout the Continent.

**The European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS)**

JDC's financial support helps EUJS organize a Summer University that brings some 300 Jewish students from across the continent together each year. JDC also offers technical assistance for regional seminars.
SPAIN

JDC has been working with the Federation of Jewish Communities of Spain, encouraging the development of new programming initiatives and helping to organize training courses for youth workers, young leaders, and communal professionals. Madrid is one of the communities currently taking part in JDC's strategic planning model, and, along with its sister communities in Barcelona and Malaga, it benefited from JDC's professional assistance in creating and filling new directorial posts. JDC also continues to provide financial assistance to a dwindling number of World War II era refugees in Barcelona.

THE BALTIC COUNTRIES: LATVIA, LITHUANIA, ESTONIA, AND THE KALININGRAD REGION

JDC's work in the Baltic countries has a dual focus, helping the local Jewish communities to develop welfare programs for impoverished elderly Jews while working to rebuild Jewish communal life. The elderly predominate in most of these communities, and the region's continuing economic difficulties have made them especially vulnerable. Generous support from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and Sweden's Baltic Forum has enabled the communities to dramatically enlarge and improve the social services they have established with JDC's help. These include food packages, hot meals and meals-on-wheels programs, and home care, all of which are helping these Jews, most of whom are Holocaust survivors, to maintain their dignity as they grow older and frailer.

Senior citizens' clubs and the "Warm Home" program that JDC helped establish provide cultural and social activities for the elderly and help to allay their loneliness. The first summer camp program for seniors was held last year in Riga, in a pilot project that will be replicated by other communities in the region.

JDC has also been helping the local communities provide medical care to needy, mostly elderly Jews. Both the recently renovated, volunteer-staffed Ezra Medical Consultation Clothing distribution program in Vilnius—part of the continuum of social services for needy elderly Jews developed by the Baltic communities with JDC's aid.

Photo: © Zion Ozeri
Center in Vilnius, which now serves over 600 clients, and the Riga Jewish Hospital, a key provider of free care, have benefited from JDC's efforts to secure in-kind donations and facilitate contacts with Western institutions. A more comprehensive health program is currently being put in place both in Latvia and in Lithuania.

JDC helped develop Jewish community centers (JCCs) in Vilnius, Tallinn, and Riga and is currently helping to renovate the buildings in which they are housed. It continues to encourage the local communities to develop varied programming to serve the needs of the different age groups within their populations. Programs for parents were expanded last year, and special emphasis was put on developing activities for young adults, singles, women, and adults with special needs.

JDC has been providing books and other educational materials to the region's Jewish kindergartens, day, and Sunday schools and funding training courses for their teachers and principals. It also continues to support the development of Jewish youth clubs and student unions and provides ongoing training for their leaders. It sponsored summer and winter camps for youngsters and university students last year and helped the student unions create a menu of activities that includes a constant connection to the Internet.

The youth club in Vilnius has been growing nicely, and a new Youth Center was opened last year within the framework of Riga's flourishing JCC. Already serving over 400 teenagers and older students, the Youth Center's independent roster of programs includes courses, lectures, conferences, and camps as well as social activities.

Leadership development continues to be a regional JDC priority, with Baltic leaders participating in various LEATID Europe seminars and a host of local training events organized last year for various groups of communal workers. The Buncher Leadership Program has its first-ever Baltics-only group of trainees this year, which will allow the participants to tackle issues specific to this region. To enhance communal self-sufficiency, JDC has been encouraging the development of local support from emerging businessmen. Important progress was made with the founding of UJA Latvia, whose fundraising activities are already under way.

JDC once again made certain that no needy Jew went without matza for Passover last spring, providing over 10 tons for regional distribution. It also continues to facilitate communal Jewish holiday celebrations and to supply other items essential for traditional Jewish life. In cooperation with the Claims Conference, the Baltic Forum, local Jewish youth movements, and the French Jewish Scouts, more than 3,500 Passover food packages were distributed to impoverished elderly Jews throughout the region in 1998, nearly six times the number distributed the previous year.

While respecting each country's distinctive characteristics, JDC continues to address the Baltic Jewish communities in a regional way, thereby helping to promote an exchange of ideas and expertise and optimize scarce resources. More than 150 Jewish leaders from 15 communities discussed common concerns and planned joint activities at the fifth Baltic Knesset (General Assembly) last year, which was held in the Estonian resort of Laulasmaa. JDC has also been encouraging the communities in the region's three capital cities to expand and improve services to the smaller Jewish populations on their periphery.

JDC helped the Lithuanian and Estonian communities mark the tenth anniversary of their renewal in 1998; the resulting massive celebrations were themselves landmarks on the road to Jewish communal reconstruction.

TRANSMIGRANTS

JDC's transmigrant activities remain concentrated in Vienna, with the number of cases rising each summer—as the approaching end of the US fiscal year limits visa availability—only to drop again in the fall. Since 1991, JDC has expected all transmigrants to be self-supporting or to receive financial assistance from relatives already in the United States. JDC assistance is mainly of a technical nature, with transmigrants helped to find suitable rental housing or to secure social assistance or medical care. Although JDC funds have been available only for emergency cases, last year JDC, in collaboration with HIAS, started a modest housing subsidy program to enable clients to afford a better standard of housing. Home visits have also been stepped up to encourage clients to maintain higher living standards.

Cultural and educational activities continue to be provided for adults and children awaiting processing, with special programs for the Jewish holidays organized in cooperation with the local Jewish community and the local Lubavitch rabbi. The Vienna office also provides a variety of support for JDC's programs in Eastern Europe.
The Romanian economy continued its downward spiral last year, with no bottom in sight and no forward momentum being generated to relieve the increasing impoverishment and despondency of the Romanian people, who are fast losing all hope for the future.

As more and more of the nation's elderly are forced to choose between heating their apartments or paying their rent, the Jewish community welfare programs that JDC supports have taken on a life-saving quality for the aging Holocaust survivors who benefit from these services. JDC staff have been keeping careful tabs on the deteriorating economic status of the Jewish elderly, and in the fall of 1998 they adjusted the threshold for assistance once again to reflect the new realities. Unfortunately, JDC’s global budget constraints have forced cutbacks in aid in recent years; coupled with the cumulative rate of inflation, this has brought about a sharp reduction in the real value of the community’s various assistance programs.

For over 31 years, FEDROM, the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania, has been JDC’s partner in these welfare endeavors. Although FEDROM’s own income has been adversely affected by the economic downturn, by dipping into its limited reserves, it managed to increase its share of funding for welfare services in 1998 in order to soften the impact on the lives of these frail and lonely survivors.

With additional numbers of elderly Jews now forced to turn to the community—their only family—for help, the total receiving monthly cash assistance continues to rise, despite mortalities; the number went from about 581 in 1997 to about 616 in 1998, and winter relief grants provided much needed aid last year to 2,168 impoverished individuals. These grants and other services are administered by FEDROM’s Social Assistance Department, which has markedly improved the quality and efficiency of its operations.

Generous aid from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany has enabled FEDROM to make major improvements in its hot meals program. This is currently providing over 500,000 heavily subsidized meals a year at three old age homes and nine kosher canteens, with meals-on-wheels delivered three times a week to some 500 homebound elderly. Both a newly renovated dining room and a spacious, new central kosher kitchen went into operation in Bucharest in 1998; renovations were completed at eight canteens.
JDC's Objectives in Eastern Europe

- JDC helps individual communities provide elderly Holocaust survivors with the material assistance they need to live out their lives with dignity as Jews.

- JDC works to ensure that benefits are provided in a regionally equitable manner, and that those assisted will come as close as possible to having the modest minimum income needed to maintain acceptable living conditions.

- Local communities are helped to develop additional services to relieve the loneliness of the elderly while meeting their physical needs.

- JDC continues to encourage the process of Jewish renewal under way in these renascent communities by stimulating the growth of Jewish cultural, religious, educational, and youth activities.

- JDC helps individual communities organize effectively and rebuild needed services; it promotes the development and training of lay and professional leaders and encourages actions to increase self-sufficiency.

- All these efforts are designed to help ensure, where feasible, a viable and dynamic Jewish life for the future.

- In keeping with its global policy, JDC, in cooperation with the Jewish Agency and the Government of Israel, will respond to emergency situations, helping to rescue and care for Jews in danger or distress.

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1 Figures are approximate.

Ed. Note: JDC's activities in response to the 1999 Kosovo crisis are described in the introductory and JDC-IDP sections of this Annual Report.
around the country; and vehicles were purchased to aid in the delivery of food packages and supplies—all with Claims Conference funds.

Eight packages were distributed during the course of 1998 to 2,510 community members, with four additional packages sent to about 500 assistees living in towns with no kosher canteens. In the current economic climate, these food packages are more important than ever to elderly Jews struggling to purchase the bare necessities of life. Some 2,350 individuals received special Passover packages this year, and 1,320 received pre-Passover cash grants, while matza purchased in Israel was again distributed by FEDROM free to assistees and sold to Jews with means.

As has been done with other facets of the community's welfare program, the medications program was computerized last year. JDC purchased medications for 1,775 elderly in 1998, and FEDROM's clothing distribution program helped some 2,940 individuals survive the harsh Romanian winter. JDC continues to seek in-kind contributions of medicines, warm clothing, and blankets to help meet this community's overwhelming needs. It was very gratified by the valuable donation of medications made to the community last fall by the members of the Tidewater, VA Federation mission.

Through FEDROM's Bucharest Polyclinic and its network of local clinics, health care services were provided last year to about 2,100 elderly Jews, while 570 individuals benefited from home care. JDC staff in neighboring countries have been helping FEDROM to improve the training given to its health and home care workers.

Early in 1998, JDC helped FEDROM open a new day care center for the elderly at the former Balus Home in Bucharest. The facility was renovated and equipped with funds from the Claims Conference and the Weinberg Foundation. It initially provided some 40 heretofore homebound and isolated Holocaust survivors with a three-day-a-week program of social activities, physical and occupational therapy, and personal care. Additional support from the Claims Conference and JDC is enabling the center to expand its hours of operation this year and draw in additional numbers of elderly Jews.

The eye care program developed by Project Vision, Inc., an Atlanta-based organization of Jewish ophthalmologists, with the help of FEDROM and JDC, is truly special. Generously supported by the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, the project has helped to restore or vastly improve the sight of some 300 elderly Holocaust survivors. A new Weinberg Foundation grant enabled the program to expand further in 1998, with 1,608 patients examined by year's end and 166 surgical procedures and 92 laser treatments performed. The program has served as a springboard for the development of similar efforts in neighboring countries. The Jewish Braille Institute of America's program for visually impaired elderly also continues to thrive and has been expanding into the provinces.
renovations at the Rosen Home. Along with the efforts of the Home's new director, these have been helping to improve conditions for the 173 current residents of what is now the sole Jewish residential facility for the aged in Bucharest. JDC also helps support two small nursing homes in Transylvania with 40 residents.

Modeled on the prototype observed by community leaders on a JDC-sponsored study mission to Moldova and Ukraine, Romania's own "Warm Home" program has grown over the past year from one to three homes in Bucharest and three homes in the town of Bacua. JDC's social service expert for the former Soviet Union has shepherded this project, well aware of the difference it can make in the lives of the lonely Jewish elderly. A photography project funded by the John W. Uhlmann and the Patricia Werthan Uhlmann Foundations was completed in 1998, providing a photographic record for the community of the people it has been helping. All assistees received copies of their personal photographs, and their accounts of Jewish life in Romania over the past seven decades were recorded on two digital video cameras.

These video cameras are also being used by those involved in Jewish youth work, a sphere of community activity that has burgeoned of late, sparked by the work of expatriate JDC Jewish Service Corps (JSC)/Areivim volunteers and a new, local director of youth and leadership development whose training in Israel was sponsored by JDC. The director heads a new FEDROM department dedicated to expanding youth programs throughout the country. A youth services office and a youth club were opened in Bucharest last year, and special training was provided for the counselors in Romania's fourth delegation to the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas, Hungary. Leadership development issues were a primary focus of discussion at the FEDROM leaders' retreat last August, and a commitment was made to join in supporting various JDC-initiated programs to advance the selection and training of potential young leaders.

The 1998-99 JSC volunteers have been serving additional Jewish communities in Transylvania and Moldavia along with the community in Bucharest. The volunteers are training local youth to lead new programs, helping to revamp the community Talmud Torahs and involve parents in their offerings, and teaching Hebrew and other Jewish subjects. They have also been enhancing the activities of the computer clubs and the Jewish education resource libraries established in seven localities over the past two years with the generous help of visiting JDC Board members.

Funding for this year's volunteers and for other community development projects has been provided by the John W. Uhlmann and the Patricia Werthan Uhlmann Foundations, the Joseph Meyerhoff Family Charitable Trusts, and Harold Grinspoon and Diane Troderman of Springfield, MA.

The increasing activity in the Jewish community is a testament to the efforts of the distinguished Israeli rabbi who has been serving as Chief Rabbi for the past two years, in an interim solution to the community's religious leadership needs. Despite his part-time status, he has succeeded in bringing about an increased involvement by Jews throughout the country in religious and other community programs. He has also supported additional training for the community's religious functionaries to enhance their ability to contribute to Romanian Jewish life.

In April 1998, a Self-Sufficiency Seminar was held in Bucharest for all of the European Jewish communities served by JDC. The choice of site was deliberate, since Romania was used as a case study: the improvements made by the Jewish community with JDC's help in professionalizing its management of communal properties and increasing the efficiency of its operations can serve as a model for other countries. This, despite the fact that Romania's economic situation is so bad that better management has succeeded only in avoiding a huge decrease in communal income, and any real financial benefits must await a turn-around in the Romanian economy that is not even on the horizon.
HUNGARY

With the two-year-old Hungarian Jewish Public Heritage Foundation now making regular annuity payments to eligible Holocaust survivors, almost two-thirds of those who had been receiving cash assistance through JDC's welfare programs have been removed from the disbursement list. Nevertheless, about 1,000 of these former assistees are still being aided by JDC through the Hungarian Jewish Social Support Foundation (HJSSF); they are part of the approximately 5,000 mostly ailing and homebound elderly cared for by HJSSF. In addition to cash assistance—which was still being provided to 550 individuals last year—HJSSF's social services include a home care program of increasing quality, help with urgently needed home repairs, and special cash grants to help the elderly and the disabled purchase medications and gain access to hospital care.

Administered partly in cooperation with the Budapest municipality, the home care program covers all the medical and rehabilitation needs of the elderly, including medical and nursing care, dietary supervision, and physical and speech therapy. A first aid beeper service introduced in 1998 now gives the mostly isolated homebound access to emergency help through a device that can be worn as a wristwatch.

Additional HJSSF programs include a legal advocacy service that helps 20 to 30 clients a day, a three-day-a-week dental clinic for some 570 elderly, and a program for the visually impaired. Implemented in cooperation with the Jewish Braille Institute of America, the latter provides listening devices and audio cassettes, including an ongoing "talking magazine," to 670 registered members. Some 800 lonely Jewish elderly enjoy the meals and companionship, organized activities, and professional support provided at five senior centers in Budapest and one each in Szeged, Debrecen, and Miskolc, while three Jewish old age homes—two in Budapest and one in Szeged—are maintained with JDC's help.

To aid the elderly in their ongoing struggle to make ends meet in an inflationary economy, JDC continues to support the Budapest Central Kosher Kitchen, which was moved to the new Sandor Scheiber school complex last year. At this gleaming new facility, hot meals are prepared for the kosher canteens, senior centers, and meals-on-wheels program which together serve some 1,500 individuals. JDC also helps the Orthodox community maintain a food program for 175 impoverished elderly, and it supports small kosher kitchens in Szeged, Debrecen, and Miskolc.

HJSSF volunteers help deliver food packages every two months to about 500 elderly throughout Budapest. The volunteers, adults as well as students from the Jewish schools, supplement the efforts of the Foundation's social workers by making regular visits to the homebound and helping to staff a medical equipment loan center modeled on those established in the former Soviet Union. The Foundation works with mentally disabled community members of different ages, operating
weekly support groups that encourage them to attempt a more independent lifestyle. HJSSF is also involved in a variety of non-sectarian professional training programs that have been of substantial benefit to the Jewish community, details of which are in the JDC-IDP section of this report.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany continues to provide generous support for various programs and services that benefit Hungary’s survivor population. Grants were awarded to the Budapest Jewish community last year to technically upgrade and buy new vans for its meals-on-wheels program; a community in the countryside with 400 survivors was able to build a new kosher kitchen and dining room; the Jewish Charity Hospital received funds to purchase badly needed new laboratory equipment; and the Kut Foundation, a walk-in psychiatric clinic for survivors and their children, was able to cover its rent. JDC helps in the application process and supervises the implementation of the grant agreements.

Along with Gallaudet University and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, JDC-Hungary co-sponsored an international conference last June on “Deaf People in Hitler’s Europe,” thereby helping to fill a gap in the study of Hitler-era persecution. It also organized a special effort to reach out to Hungarian-speaking Jews in Ukraine hurt by last year’s floods, sending HJSSF activists to distribute medical supplies, blankets, and clothing directly to Jewish villagers.

A total of 1,700 youngsters participated in various two-week sessions last summer at the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas. This time, only half the participants in each camp session were from Hungary. The other half came from 11 other former Communist countries, including a first-time delegation from Lithuania, a return group from Bulgaria, and children from the war-torn nations of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia.

JDC-Hungary conducted an intensive training session last April for about 30 youth leaders from Romania, Slovakia, and the former Yugoslavia; most subsequently served as counselors at Szarvas, accompanying the youngsters who came from their respective countries. Young adults from all over Eastern Europe returned to Szarvas last summer for the camp’s first international reunion; the former campers were eager to renew cross-border friendships and re-immerses themselves in the special Jewish experience that made Szarvas such a pivotal part of their lives.

Preparing meals for homebound elderly Jews in Hungary. Photo: © Richard Lobell
In July 1998, the Beit David Synagogue and Communal Center, the first new synagogue built in Eastern Europe since the Holocaust, was dedicated at Szarvas. It is named in memory of David Ben-Rafael, an Israeli diplomat and son of Helen and JDC Honorary Executive Vice-President Ralph Goldman, who was killed in the 1992 Israeli embassy bombing in Argentina. Members of the Hungarian Parliament, the Mayor of Szarvas, Jewish leaders from the United States and Hungary, 400 Jewish campers, and 100 elderly survivors celebrated the event together, with a festive lunch served in the camp’s newly renovated and enlarged dining facilities.

The airy, eight-sided synagogue building, which was built with funds from the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, also serves as a multi-purpose center. It houses computer facilities and a library and provides a venue for the burgeoning number of camp activities. For many of the youngsters at Szarvas, especially the increasing number coming from smaller and more remote Jewish communities, the Beit David Synagogue is the first Jewish house of worship they have ever seen; visiting it and attending services there will add something unique to their own Szarvas experience.

The Balint Jewish Community Center (JCC) is playing a growing role in Jewish life in Budapest, where the majority of Hungarian Jewry resides, with some 7,000 individuals involved to date in one or more Center activities. These include clubs and educational activities for all age groups and all segments of the community, including those with special needs. The Center also hosts music, dance, and theatrical performances, lectures, Jewish holiday workshops and celebrations, special exhibits, and community events and development projects.

While JDC continues its supervisory role, it has been able to substantially reduce its financial contribution to the Center’s operating budget as program fees and local fundraising efforts have taken hold. These were given a boost last year with the establishment of a local support foundation whose effective board of directors is drawn from the Hungarian business community.

In September 1998, the splendid new building of the Sandor Scheiber School and Gymnasium, built with Hungarian government compensation funds on community-owned land adjacent to the Jewish hospital, opened its doors to students of the Anna Frank Gymnasium, the Jewish community high school that it has replaced. Planned as a more comprehensive facility serving children aged six and up, the new Jewish school had an initial enrollment of 240 students and is receiving operating support from JDC.
and age group was represented, and all present celebrated Shabbat together in a moving, all-inclusive way. Participants left the seminar with a strong sense of Jewish unity and a deeper measure of hope for a promising Jewish future in Hungary.

FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Ed. Note: JDC's activities in response to the 1999 Kosovo crisis are described in the introductory and JDC-IDP sections of this Annual Report.

JDC was involved in a number of efforts in 1998 that embraced all five countries of the former Yugoslavia, helping to promote a basic JDC goal: increased cooperation among the local Jewish communities. Community activists from Bosnia, Croatia, and Yugoslavia were enthusiastic participants in "Esperansa '98," a celebration of Sephardic culture in the Balkans. JDC helped initiate this event, which was held near Sofia, Bulgaria last July.

In November 1998, 40 Jewish students from throughout the former Yugoslavia came together in Vienna to renew their ties and perhaps chart a shared future at the "Joint Gathering of Jewish Youth." The retreat was organized and sponsored by JDC and Vienna's Jewish Welcome Service, with the financial support of the Austrian government. A parallel gathering of more than 100 Jewish adults from all parts of the former Yugoslavia was held that same month in Bled, Slovenia; it was organized by the Slovenian Jewish community with JDC's encouragement and support.

With local leadership development another JDC goal, the executive directors of the Jewish communities in Zagreb and Ljubljana took part in a LEATID Europe training seminar, along with a lay leader from Belgrade. For each of the five countries of the former Yugoslavia, JDC coordinated the distribution in 1998 of the first series of payments from the Swiss Humanitarian Fund and has preparations in place for subsequent disbursements. Given the unique political and economic complications affecting this region, JDC was asked to serve as the intermediary in this sensitive situation to ensure that all who are eligible for these payments do in fact receive them.
**BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA**

As it does in other Eastern European countries, JDC now guarantees a modest minimum income to elderly Jews in need in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and it is currently providing regular cash assistance to 75 individuals. JDC also continues to repair the war-damaged apartments of Jewish returnees in Sarajevo, in cooperation with Swiss Caritas and other donors.

Through La Benevolencija, the philanthropic arm of the Sarajevo Jewish community, JDC and an international network of partners have maintained a still-vital series of humanitarian initiatives. These include a special medical clinic, a home care and visitation program for the frail elderly, a soup kitchen, and the distribution of food packages, clothing, and other donated supplies. The free pharmacy was closed last spring when commercial establishments resumed normal operations.

Educational materials and financial help to the new Sunday school. It has been nurturing the development of a Jewish youth group, and it enabled 18 Bosnian youngsters to attend the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp in Szarvas, Hungary in 1998. JDC sends a former Sarajevan, who now teaches Judaism in Israel, back to Bosnia twice a year to lead Passover seders and High Holiday services. Last fall, he began an intensive training program for those interested in becoming cantors; the response to this practical course in a vital aspect of Judaism was so encouraging that plans for a second session were immediately set.

**CROATIA AND SLOVENIA**

JDC helps the Zagreb Jewish community provide regular assistance payments and visits from a community social worker to 18 aging and impoverished Holocaust survivors. The cost of caring for the homebound is shared by JDC, the municipality, and nine beneficiaries. The elderly Jews from Bosnia who had been living in a public old age home in Split have all been moved to the Lavoslav Svarc Jewish Old Age Home in Zagreb. JDC has been providing pocket money to these former evacuees, who have no source of income, friends, or family support. A new pensioners' club has been established in Zagreb and is attracting some 50 people to weekly lectures on health and Jewish topics.

To cope with the ongoing financial crisis of the Svarc Home and ease its burden of debt, JDC helped negotiate a one-time grant from the Croatian government in 1998. JDC also brought in the head of the Maimonides Home in Vienna, who identified ways to control costs and improve the overall management and programmatic quality of the 80-bed Zagreb facility. A five-person executive board is now in charge of administration, and staff members are being sent to Vienna to learn how to do more with fewer resources.

After a long JDC-assisted search, the Jews of Zagreb last fall held a gala ceremony to welcome their new rabbi, the first to serve this community in over 50 years. A monthly family Shabbat program initiated by local community members has been attracting over 100 people, with most of the...
costs borne by the participants. JDC continues to provide kosher food and religious items from Israel, and it sponsors communal Passover seders in Zagreb and several other communities.

The Jewish kindergarten in Zagreb, which JDC helps fund, expanded significantly last year. JDC also supports classes in Hebrew and Jewish studies, a Sunday school, an increasingly popular Israeli folk dance troupe, a Jewish music ensemble, and various youth activities in Zagreb, as well as informal Jewish educational activities in two smaller communities.

New community leadership in Slovenia has encouraged a revival of Jewish life in that tiny community, with an apartment purchased with JDC funds in Ljubljana now serving as a community center. With JDC’s support, the Jews of Slovenia have renewed their communal celebration of major Jewish holidays, and they have begun a cooperative relationship with the nearby Jewish community of Trieste, Italy.

**YUGOSLAVIA (SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO) AND MACEDONIA**

In 1998, JDC, with the help of World Jewish Relief (WJR, UK), provided cash relief, medications, social assistance, and rent subsidies to the most vulnerable members of the Jewish community, who were most affected by the country’s very difficult economic situation. These include impoverished elderly Jews from Bosnia who, by year’s end, had been integrated into the community’s regular JDC-supported social service program. As tensions mounted in Kosovo in 1998 and outbursts of fighting increased, the Federation of Jewish Communities in Yugoslavia (SAVEZ), with JDC’s support, sent emergency grants and medications from the Belgrade dispensary to the 60 Jews who lived there. Nearly one quarter of the Jewish population in Yugoslavia was aided last year by that community pharmacy, which was established by JDC through SAVEZ and maintained with the help of WJR and in-kind donations. Chronically ill elderly Jews and Righteous Gentiles, former Bosnian evacuees, and members of the Jewish communities in Republika Srpska—where medications are not available—were among those aided in 1998, with over 1,000 prescriptions filled each month.

Over the past few years, JDC has supported the enthusiastic efforts of the community’s native-born young rabbi, whose training in Israel it had sponsored. Based in Belgrade, the rabbi has reached out to the smaller communities in Yugoslavia and Macedonia, adding to the revitalization of Jewish community life that began first in Belgrade and then spread, with encouragement from WJR and JDC, to communities like Pancevo, Novi Sad, Subotica, and Skopje.

JDC helped 90 youngsters from Yugoslavia and Macedonia attend the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas, Hungary in 1998, with some of the youthful counselors taking part in pre-camp training sessions conducted last spring in Budapest. JDC’s Budapest office has also been helping to train those involved in the Jewish youth groups. Hebrew and Jewish history classes, choirs, Israeli folk dance groups, adult clubs, and women’s groups that had begun to flourish in many of these Yugoslav and Macedonian communities. Sadly, most of these activities were put on hold early in 1999 as the crisis escalated and the NATO bombing began.

**POLAND**

The past year saw further growth in Poland’s Jewish community as more of the previously unaffiliated moved closer to the Jewish world. JDC’s efforts helped trigger this movement, which it is now working to reinforce by nurturing the development of new organizations and encouraging existing institutions to reshape their programs to respond to emerging needs. An increasing proportion of JDC’s energies are being devoted to fostering the active participation of new groups in the community and directing the budding interest in concrete action to rebuild communal life.

Meanwhile, through its Krakow office, JDC continues to provide much-needed aid to the community’s aging and impoverished Holocaust survivors. In 1998, some 1,670 individuals received periodic cash assistance, and about 520 elderly benefited from JDC’s medication distribution program. JDC also supports the country’s seven kosher kitchens, which provided 71,000 free meals last year to elderly Holocaust survivors, and it provides Passover food for the community. The Jewish Braille Institute of America continues to work with JDC to help improve living conditions for the visually impaired. On behalf of the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, JDC also forwards assistance payments to Righteous Gentiles living in Poland.

Although the welfare program is administered by the Central Jewish Welfare Commission, which includes representatives of the most important Polish...
Jewish organizations, it has been completely financed by JDC. As such, it has been limited to assistance for the survivor population, in keeping with JDC's policy for Eastern Europe. However, as the community's demographics have changed, it has become increasingly apparent that a broader program is required to address the needs of all age groups and provide social services as well as cash assistance. A symposium organized by JDC last May confirmed this, and a special committee of experts was organized to study various proposals for change. In addition to serving a concrete need, establishing a more comprehensive social service network will be an important step forward in the community rebuilding process that JDC has been helping to support.

Meanwhile, the training program JDC organized for the community's social workers to increase their effectiveness in serving the elderly continues, with four seminars held in 1998 and a similar series currently under way. This program has taken on additional significance in view of the growing

acknowledgement that an expanded range of professional skills will be needed to adequately serve the community.

JDC provides financial support for the Jewish Religious Community of Poland (JRPC) which, in addition to operating the kosher kitchens described above, maintains synagogues and organizes religious services and holiday celebrations in 15 localities. In 1998, JDC helped support the salary of JRPC's new executive director, the first one to have the professional skills and experience needed to help restructure the organization along more productive lines. JDC also helps support TSKZ, the Social and Cultural Association of Polish Jews, which has 16 branches around the country. JDC has been encouraging TSKZ to reshape its Jewish programming and activities to meet changing community needs. While JDC's financial constraints have lessened the impact it can make on both these organizations, it has been trying to mitigate the effect of its recent budget cuts by helping local leaders make more effective use of current allocations.

Over the past year, JDC has continued to facilitate the awarding of grants from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany to various local organizations. Two recent grants have enabled the TSKZ to renovate and provide new furnishings for the Akiva Kohane Community Campsite in Srodborow, much to the delight of the elderly who summer there and the more youthful participants in the various seminars, weekend retreats, and summer and winter camps held there. The Jewish Historical Institute (JHI) received funding for urgently needed repairs and reconstruction work that will preserve its archives from further damage and make them more functional. Scheduled for completion this summer, the JHI building makeover will create conference facilities that can be used for seminars and cultural programs that will bring together Jews and non-Jews interested in learning more about the long history of Polish Jewry.

Both the Jewish Combatants' Organization and the Association of Holocaust Children in Poland—a self-help organization for those hidden by non-Jews during the Holocaust—received financial help from the Claims Conference last year for emergency medical programs. The latter group also received funding for group therapy sessions.

JDC has been involved in the implementation and supervision of all of these programs. It also provides other forms of technical assistance to the above organizations, to PUSZ, the Polish Union of
Jewish Students, and to various other formal and informal groups. These include a new group focusing on anti-Semitism and a think tank for new ideas. JDC and TSKZ again enabled some 34 youngsters to attend the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas, Hungary last year, with JDC now working to develop year-round activities for all of the community's Szarvas graduates.

As part of JDC's community building work, JDC staff continue to work with local leaders to help move Polish Jewry toward greater self-sufficiency. To achieve this objective, financial resources are being sought through the reclamation of community properties allowed by various articles of the 1997 law regulating relations between the Jewish community and the Polish state. A number of properties have already been returned in various localities over the past year.

The third JDC Jewish Service Corps volunteer to serve in Poland completed his tour of duty early in 1999. In addition to continuing his predecessors' efforts on behalf of this rapidly changing Jewish community—and particularly the 400 or so young people eager to learn more about their Jewish heritage—much of his time was devoted to the Resource Center for Jewish Education. Working with the local JDC staff members who run the Center, he helped structure its materials more efficiently and make its wealth of resources more accessible to the community by putting its catalogue and more and more of the sources themselves on-line. The computer lab that was set up at the Center with help from the World ORT Union is a critical part of this effort, and the Web page that was established last year is giving community members instant access to basic Jewish information as well as details of upcoming organizational events.

Center staff members are also responsible for preparing the materials used in JDC's training seminars for future lay and professional leaders and youth group activists. Both the number of seminars and the number of participants continue to grow, and those who have completed the entire cycle of courses have been eager to maintain an active involvement in community affairs.

A new, year-long series of seminars, this time on Jewish education, got under way last fall, while a community management course held in Srodborow in October 1998 was particularly successful. The latter benefited from the input of several individuals who had recently taken part, under JDC's sponsorship, in various LEATID Europe and JDC-ESHEL training programs. After a preparatory seminar held in January 1999, 15 candidates were chosen for the second JDC Buncher Leadership Program in Israel to be organized solely for participants from Poland. Plans are now being made to make these Buncher programs the regular culmination of a two-year cycle of leadership training activities for this amazingly resurgent Jewish community.

**BULGARIA**

Over the past year, the economic situation in Bulgaria has been stabilized, albeit at a level too low to provide any gains in income for the average individual. State pensions are inadequate, and JDC provided monthly cash assistance to 1,336 Jewish elderly and disabled in 1998 to enable them to maintain a very modest quality of life. It also continued to fund the emergency aid it instituted with Shalom, the Organization of the Jews in Bulgaria, at the beginning of the country's economic crisis; this has been providing some 1,500 impoverished Holocaust survivors with food packages and heating grants. Jewish communities in Switzerland and the
UK have provided additional support for this emergency effort.

A major social service breakthrough was achieved in 1998 with the opening of a new day care center for the elderly at Beit Ha'am, the Jewish community center in Sofia. Since last April, nearly 100 pensioners a day have been utilizing the center's services, which range from hot lunches and exercise programs to medical checkups, treatments, and physical therapy. Support for this program has been provided by Shalom, JDC, the European Union, and World Jewish Relief (WJR, UK).

Meanwhile, with help from the Sofia municipality and JDC, Shalom continues to provide meals and home care and to arrange for volunteer visits to about 45 homebound Jews. Another “first” for the elderly was achieved in 1998 with the organization of a five-day “golden-age” camp outside Sofia, which provided a welcome respite last summer for about 100 Jewish pensioners.

JDC sent a huge container of medicines, vitamins, clothing, and school supplies to the Jewish community last year; these were of particular benefit to Jewish schoolchildren and to the elderly, who were also inoculated against the flu. JDC continues to support Shalom’s provision of dental services to these two age groups at the WJR clinic in the public school that hosts the Jewish school. Generous funding from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and a per capita commitment from the Sofia municipality have enabled the construction of a new 40-bed community old age home to get under way, with JDC providing technical assistance for this project.

With the participation of those living in its 19 constituent Jewish communities. Shalom elected a new president in 1998 and a new executive board. The board includes both new and experienced lay leaders as well as representatives of the different age groups who have been encouraged to take an active part in Bulgarian Jewish life. Community members also elected a new editor-in-chief of the bi-weekly Jewish magazine, who has turned this publication into an open forum for all Shalom members.

JDC continues to help Shalom improve its management structure, enabling community leaders to participate in LEATID Europe training seminars as well as in more specialized training programs. In July 1998, 15 lay and professionals leaders took part in the first Bulgarian pre-seminar for the JDC Buncher Leadership Program, in preparation for their participation in the program’s intensive Israel-based training seminar this year.

JDC also continues to provide advice and consultation in the area of property management to help in furthering the community’s goal of achieving self-sufficiency by maximizing its income from communal properties. A new property manager has been working with the Shalom board since mid-1998, and with the support of WJR and technical assistance from JDC, a building maintenance company has been

Over 300 Jewish students are studying Hebrew and Jewish history and traditions at Shalom’s day school in Sofia.

Photo: Roy Mittelman
established to aid in the renovation and upkeep of existing facilities as well as newly returned properties. Four local workers were sent to Israel last year for a one-month training program. Since their return last September, they have been working for Shalom, servicing community properties and helping the Jewish elderly with critical home repairs.

One of the highlights of 1998 was the dedication last March of the newly renovated Beit Ha'am. WJR provided funding and technical assistance for this project, which has provided the community with modern facilities for its JDC-supported programming efforts. In addition to the aforementioned daycare center, these include a golden age club, a Jewish Sunday school for some 100 youngsters, a youth club and other student activities. Hebrew choirs, a chamber orchestra, and a Hebrew dance group.

JDC and Shalom are partners in an ambitious new program for children and youth that began in October 1998: in addition to informal Jewish educational activities, the program includes year-round outings, seminars, and camps and has already involved over 200 youngsters in Sofia. The same number of children came from all parts of the country last summer to the JDC-supported camp in Kovacevski, while 40 older youngsters were sent to the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas, Hungary.

The middle generations had their own excitement last summer as some 200 Jews from Bulgaria, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Bosnia, and Croatia came together in Sofia last July for “Esperansa '98,” the gala celebration of Sephardic culture in the Balkans that JDC helped coordinate. The three-day event, which featured Sephardic music and dance, theater performances, and art exhibitions, was co-sponsored by JDC, Shalom, WJR, and the European Council of Jewish Communities.

The Jewish day school, which established in 1992 in one of Sofia’s public schools, was renovated last year with the help of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation. JDC and the Lauder Foundation continue to support the school—which has well over 300 Jewish students—as well as extra-curricular activities for the children and their parents. The new Hebrew teaching system officially incorporated into the school’s curriculum last fall is facilitating the study of Jewish holidays, history, and traditions along with the Hebrew language. All children at the school receive dental care at the WJR clinic, medical checkups, and a nutritious lunch, along with fruits and vitamins to prevent deficiencies.

JDC’s Jewish Service Corps volunteers have been helping Shalom operate the increasingly popular Jewish Resource Center, which is now located in Beit Ha’am. They have also been reaching out to Bulgaria’s 18 smaller Jewish communities and working to create innovative activities for all age groups that will enhance the participants’ connection to the Jewish community. The volunteers’ success in helping to train a new generation of youth leaders has allowed local staff to take over the responsibility for running the camp programs at Kovacevski as well as the new, year-round activities for youth.

For the past two years, a young Bulgarian has been studying in Israel under the auspices of JDC, determined to fulfill his ambition to become Bulgaria’s first native-born rabbi in the twenty-first century. As part of his training, he returned home for Passover and the High Holidays last year to assist the Sephardic rabbi from Israel who, with JDC’s support, has been working in Bulgaria since 1994. The rabbi has facilitated the community’s renewed interest in Jewish rituals and traditions, helping to install kosher kitchens, for example, in Beit Ha’am and at the Kovacevski camp. He has been visibly involved in most community programs, and his efforts have added a special dimension to the increasingly vibrant, many-textured skein of Bulgarian Jewish life.

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

JDC assistance to Czech Jewry is largely technical and is designed to facilitate the long-term development of this pluralistic community. The government’s return of a considerable number of communal properties in recent years has made several of the local Jewish communities financially secure. In addition to financing their own welfare caseload, JDC has been encouraging these communities to support those Jews in need in the poorer locales. In 1998, the Czech Federation of Jewish Communities assumed the responsibility for running the camp programs as well as its remaining cash assistance program as well as its financial support for health services.

At the Prague community’s request, JDC has undertaken the systematic training of its social welfare personnel, drawing upon the professional knowledge and experience of the members of JDC’s former Soviet Union team. One Israeli on that team, who returned to Israel last year after an extended stay in Prague under JDC’s auspices, will continue to supervise health projects for elderly survivors in the Czech Republic and keep JDC abreast of local needs.
JDC has been coordinating a project to provide elderly Jews with the equipment and apartment modifications they need to remain living safely at home. The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany is providing a major grant to expand this effort, which has been co-sponsored by the National Health Service and the Prague Jewish community.

JDC has also been helping the Prague community design a Jewish old age home and day care center for the elderly. It brought in an Israeli expert from JDC-ESHEL last year to lead a seminar on the steps involved in setting up the new facility. JDC-ESHEL will continue to provide guidance and training to community leaders and to the local professionals selected to run the project.

Over the past few years, JDC has been providing educational materials and modest financial help to various institutions involved in religious and cultural programming efforts, including new organizations like Bejt Praha, the Open Jewish Community of Prague, and Bejt Simcha, a Progressive Jewish congregation.

By lending its support both to mainstream institutions and to the voices of Jewish diversity and pluralism in the Czech Republic, JDC is enabling Czech Jews to find the form of Jewish expression and affiliation that best meets their needs.

The Chief Rabbi of Prague has established himself as an integral part of the broader community and helps keep it focused on its Jewish educational priorities. JDC has been supporting his activities in the outlying communities as well as those of his assistant, a rabbi-educator from Israel who, with financial support from the Pincus Fund, is also working to infuse more Jewish content into community programs in Prague. In January 1999, the Czech Jewish Federation assumed financial responsibility for the kosher food and other religious items that JDC had been supplying to the smaller communities.

JDC helps support the Prague Jewish Museum’s Educational Center and is actively involved in programming development. The ORT/JDC Computer Lab is now housed at the Center and has been integrated into the museum’s Jewish educational efforts. JDC encourages Czech youngsters to attend the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp at Szarvas, Hungary; 20 Czech children did so in 1998, with their families paying their way.

SLOVAKIA

In 1998, JDC continued to provide vitally needed assistance in Slovakia, helping the Jewish community provide regular cash grants to 75 elderly and ill Holocaust survivors. JDC also subsidizes the operation of kosher canteens in Bratislava and Kosice which together provide some 150 hot meals a day and an opportunity to socialize to lonely elderly Jews. The kitchen in Kosice was recently renovated by the community with JDC’s help.

The home care programs that JDC helped both those communities initiate provide meals-on-wheels and regular visits from professionals and volunteers to about 153 elderly and disabled Jews, and JDC purchases vital or locally unavailable medications for pensioners and other Jews in need.

In November 1998, the Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities dedicated a new Jewish nursing home in Bratislava, a project made possible by grants from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and the Ezra Foundation as well as funds received by the community in the Czech gold settlement. The home will accommodate about 40 elderly Holocaust survivors from all local communities, and the Union is currently negotiating with the government to secure the funding needed to operate the home.

In Kosice, the Claims Conference has agreed to fund the construction of a day care center for aging survivors that will offer a full range of programs. In both Kosice and Bratislava there are active support groups for survivors and for Hidden Children.

The Claims Conference has also awarded a grant to the Bratislava community for the establishment of a Holocaust Documentation Center. The Center will collect and preserve all archival material in
Slovakia related to the Holocaust and serve as a memorial to those who perished. Work on the project began last autumn.

In addition to providing Slovak Jewry with matza for Passover and various religious items, JDC helps the Bratislava and Kosice communities support their rabbis and the programs they have organized. The American-born rabbi in Bratislava and his wife have expanded Jewish educational opportunities in that city, organizing classes for different age groups, communal Passover seders, and a popular kindergarten and summer day camp. The Israeli rabbi serving in Kosice is also a ritual slaughterer who, in addition to carrying out his synagogue duties, has been supplying the community kitchens with kosher meat.

Over the past year, JDC has responded to the need to develop additional cultural and social activities for Jewish youth. It actively encouraged the Slovak Union of Jewish Students, which it has been helping to support, to expand its roster of programs, and it continues to subsidize the publication of a Jewish student newspaper. It also helped transform a seniors' club into an intergenerational meeting ground for young and old, raising weekly attendance from 15 to 70 people in the process. In 1998, JDC sponsored the attendance of 80 children and counselors at the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp in Szarvas, Hungary.

To help move the community down the road to self-sufficiency, JDC has organized study visits abroad focusing on property management, and it is currently working with the local communities to ensure that some of the proceeds from the return of communal properties will go toward meeting welfare needs. JDC continues to provide training opportunities for lay leaders and professionals through the Israel-based Buncher Leadership Program, LEATID Europe, and other vehicles, and it is presently engaged in sensitizing communal workers to the special needs of the survivor population.

ALBANIA

[Ed. Note: JDC's activities in response to the 1999 Kosovo crisis are described in the introductory and JDC-IDP sections of this Annual Report.]

Continuing tension, periodic episodes of violence, and the developing crisis in neighboring Kosovo marked the past year in Albania, with serious repercussions for the nation's economy that have made it more and more difficult for people, especially pensioners, to make ends meet. In these circumstances, the cash assistance that JDC has regularly distributed provides important relief to some 20 impoverished, elderly Jews. And with many medicines simply no longer available in Albania as a result of the socio-economic situation, JDC's continuing shipments of medications are a veritable lifeline for chronically ill Jews and for children and families in need.

JDC staff have kept in touch with all of the Jewish families in Albania to verify conditions in the community. There is still much apprehension among community members, most of whom have ill or elderly parents unlikely to leave. JDC continues to supply the community with matza for Passover and with various Jewish educational materials, and it enabled 11 youngsters to attend the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation/JDC International Summer Camp in Szarvas, Hungary in 1998.

During the height of the 1997 violence, JDC brought almost one third of the community—including nearly all the families with children—to Ladispoli, Italy, where they remained temporarily under JDC's care. With one exception, all of those families returned to Albania last year, and JDC facilitated the participation of an Albanian youngster in Israel's Aliyat Hanoar (Youth Immigration) program.

A worsening of tensions last fall prevented JDC's country director from repeating his previous year's High Holiday visit. However, Albanian Jews were introduced to two other Jewish holidays in 1998 when an Italian youth leader who has been making periodic visits to the community organized a program for Shavuot last June and a Hanukkah celebration in December. These visits, which will continue as conditions permit, are part of JDC's ongoing effort to help this tiny Jewish community reclaim its Jewish heritage, for itself and for its children.
MOROCCO

Although this Jewish community has continued its slow decrease in size, it still maintains a vibrant Jewish life. Nevertheless, the community has found it increasingly hard to meet the financial and social service needs of its aged and impoverished members. And even though the higher cost of living has made assistance to the needy more critical than ever, budgetary constraints both at JDC and in the local communities have limited welfare programs to the provision of basic necessities. Although several provincial communities have agreed to assume a larger share of the costs of their cash assistance programs this year, many no longer have the manpower to help their poor and are dependent on JDC's assistance. JDC has been encouraging these communities to affiliate with their larger neighbors in order to benefit from existing social service infrastructures.

JDC continues to cover 30 percent of the costs of the Casablanca Jewish community's cash assistance program and to help pay the salaries of its social service employees. In 1998, 218 individuals received monthly welfare payments, while 113 benefited from a special fund maintained for those with extraordinary needs. With program subsidies ranging from 30 to 70 percent, JDC also helped nine provincial communities provide monthly cash grants to 103 individuals last year.

Although it reduced its subsidy in 1998 from 50 to 40 percent, JDC continues to support the Jewish home for the aged in Casablanca, which provides a full range of services to its current roster of 80 residents. The only other Jewish facilities for the elderly are in Tangier, and JDC provides 30 percent of the cost of maintaining that city's two small nursing homes, which together have about 35 residents. While 45 Jewish elderly participated in 1998 in the two-week vacation colony for seniors that JDC has been operating at Imouzzer, budget constraints have forced JDC to eliminate this program this year.

With support from JDC, OSE (Oeuvre Secours aux Enfants) is currently providing health services in Casablanca, Marrakesh, and Rabat to about 1,350 needy individuals. Two new projects have been introduced that focus on prevention: one involves oral hygiene, the other women's health. Seventy people benefited in 1998 from an emergency
MOROCCO
Jewish Population: 5,460
JDC Appropriation: $1,381,200

TUNISIA
Jewish Population: 1,700
JDC Appropriation: $632,700

YEMEN
Jewish Population: 280
JDC Appropriation: $63,300

EGYPT
Jewish Population: 120
JDC Appropriation: $64,200

ALGERIA
Jewish Population: 13
JDC Appropriation: $7,300

ETHIOPIA
JDC Appropriation: $709,500

INDIA
Jewish Population: 4,380
JDC Appropriation: $207,300

CHINA
JDC Appropriation: $4,100

MYANMAR
JDC Appropriation: $2,500

* Figures are approximate.

JDC'S OBJECTIVES IN AFRICA AND ASIA

- In North African countries where the Jewish populations are slowly but steadily diminishing in size, JDC helps communities maintain the communal institutions necessary for Jewish life.

- Throughout this area, it is a primary JDC objective to ensure that the children have access to Jewish education wherever possible.

- JDC provides various forms of social welfare assistance and institutional support to enable the Jewish aged, sick, and poor to live out their lives with dignity. Those in need represent an increasing proportion of these declining populations.

- Wherever possible, JDC encourages the consolidation of facilities and other ways to utilize communal resources to the fullest.

- In communities with sizable populations of young Jews, like India, JDC has been emphasizing cultural and educational activities that strengthen Jewish identity.

- In recent years, JDC has helped rescue entire Jewish communities, and it continues to work to assure the safety and well-being of all Jews who reside in volatile areas.

Photo: Roy Mittelman

JDC helps Morocco's needy elderly Jews live out their lives with dignity.
medical care program, the costs of which are shared by JDC, OSE, and the local communities. JDC has been working with OSE to find ways to cut the costs of this hospitalization program, especially in view of the increasing needs of this aging population. A generous bequest from the late Cecile Misrahi, a dedicated, long-term JDC staff member, is being used to transform two rooms at the Casablanca old age home into recovery rooms in order to reduce hospital stays.

The gradual decline in student enrollment in the remaining Jewish school systems in Casablanca that JDC helps subsidize—Ozar Hatorah, Lubavitch, and Ittihad—continued last fall. To encourage the schools to raise tuition to help close their budget gaps, JDC established a new scholarship fund in 1998 to aid the poorer families, with grants provided to 263 children. JDC is also encouraging the Casablanca community to take a more active role in helping these families and the schools cover tuition costs.

JDC continues to assist the schools with in-service training and curriculum enhancement, sending a consultant in 1998 to run a teacher training seminar on special education needs. JDC also pays stipends to the teachers participating in two adult study programs for men and women; these had about 58 participants last year.

JDC has been helping to support the Jewish youth programs operated by DEJJ, the Department Educatif de la Jeunesse Juive au Maroc, and by the Lubavitch movement in Casablanca and Meknes. JDC is seeking to target its funds to active programs that serve the poor, and it is encouraging the institution of user fees for those who can afford to pay and subsidies for those who cannot. In similar fashion, rather than continuing its general support for the summer camps run by these two organizations and by Ozar Hatorah, JDC has begun earmarking its funds to subsidize the attendance of poor children, with 300 expected to be aided in 1999.

**TUNISIA**

By the end of 1998, the number of mostly elderly Jews receiving monthly cash assistance payments from JDC had decreased from 133 to 112 individuals living in Tunis and in four provincial towns. Nearly all the assistees live alone; most use their grants to supplement modest pensions or savings, while some have nothing else to live on. Under the aegis of the Tunis community, JDC also funds medical care for these indigent Jews, with the middle class Jewish community of Jerba covering half the medical costs for its poorest members.

The Community's newly renovated Home for the Aged in La Goulette, a suburb of Tunis, now has some 38 residents, several of whom are able to pay the community small amounts for their care. Residents take special pleasure in the beautiful pergola that adorns their new garden, thanks to a generous bequest from the late Cecile Misrahi, a devoted “Jointnik” who served as a social service consultant in Tunisia for many years. The pergola will be used for Sukkot celebrations in the fall.

The Home is clearly the best institution for the aged in Tunisia and a haven for the well and ill, having been equipped to care for those with serious medical problems so that hospital stays can often be avoided. The generous support of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation helped to bring this about, with JDC providing the community with an interest-free loan and technical assistance for this project. JDC also funds the Home’s operating costs and the salary...
of its young Jewish director, and it sent a consultant to Tunis in 1998 to recommend ways to improve management practices and the quality of care. JDC is currently working to expand eye care and physical therapy programs for the residents as part of its emphasis on preventive medicine.

Lubavitch runs Tunis' only Jewish school, which has an enrollment of about 70 youngsters aged 3 to 16. JDC funds 70 percent of the budget and helped establish a computer class in 1998. A high birthrate and low emigration among the Jews living on the island of Jerba have filled their classrooms to overflowing. JDC helps fund two Jewish schools in Hara Kebira with a total of about 250 students; one of these, the boys’ Yeshiva, has been a major Jewish institution in Jerba for two millennia. Thanks to an early childhood educator sent in by JDC, the kindergarten has been revamped and refurbished to better accommodate its growing enrollment. Kindergartners there as well as those in Tunis and Zarzis have all been enjoying new play equipment and educational materials purchased for them by JDC as a gift from Jewish Child’s Day in London.

The 110 Jews living in Zarzis have been engaged in nothing less than a communal renaissance. They’ve built a new community hall and have just rebuilt their synagogue (which was devastated by fire in 1987); they’ve opened a new kindergarten, which already has 11 children; and they’ve been refurbishing their fine girls’ and boys’ Talmudei Torah. These part-time Jewish schools currently serve 42 youngsters and are funded in part by JDC. The schools have the enthusiastic support of the parents, who are rightfully proud of what they have accomplished.

Over the past year, all of the Jewish schools in Tunisia have benefited from various degrees of refurbishing and renovation. JDC is currently seeking to add to these physical improvements by enhancing the schools’ curricula, for in Tunisia, as elsewhere, Jewish education remains the key to Jewish continuity.

**Yemen**

JDC began funding activities in Yemen following the merger of the two republics in May 1990. It sent in Torah scrolls, books, and other religious materials, and it provided welfare assistance to the many impoverished members of the community, which then numbered about 1,000 Jews scattered in remote villages across the north. About 700 Jews have left Yemen since 1992, primarily for Israel. Since Yemen and Israel have no diplomatic relations, JDC has been serving as the arm of the organized Jewish world in Yemen. It has made all departure arrangements for community members, receiving generous support for these efforts from World Jewish Relief (UK). While departures have slowed down considerably in recent years, JDC remains responsible for the welfare of this Jewish community and, in partnership with the Jewish Agency, for its aliyah.

**Other Moslem Countries**

JDC’s relationship with the Jewish community in Turkey, and that community’s contacts with the greater Jewish world, have been strengthened by a series of visits made in recent years by JDC officers and Board members. At the community’s request, JDC has been providing technical assistance for various projects aimed at improving communal services and institutions. JDC-sponsored experts, for example, helped plan the renovation and improvement of the community’s home for the aged in Istanbul and the Ohr Hayyim Jewish hospital, projects which received generous support from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

With the help of an occupational therapist sent from Israel, JDC has also been helping to improve the quality of programming at these institutions. This technical assistance program was extended to Izmir in 1998.

In Egypt, JDC, in partnership with the tiny Jewish communities in Cairo and Alexandria, provided cash assistance last year to 31 indigent
elderly. Funds were also provided for medical care and help with burial costs, and JDC continued to fund nursing home care for three elderly Jews in Alexandria. JDC provides Jews in both Cairo and Alexandria with kosher food for Passover and other holidays. While the Alexandria community continues to rely on JDC to provide them with a cantor for the Jewish holidays, it will begin sharing the costs for this and for its kosher food supplies, using the proceeds from a recently sold synagogue.

By the spring of 1999, there were only two JDC assistees remaining in ALGERIA. JDC keeps in contact with these frail individuals via telephone from Paris; the Algerian Jewish woman who has been doing this retired from JDC at the end of 1998 but is determined to maintain her liaison role as a volunteer. In other parts of the Moslem world last year, JDC continued to help remaining Jewish communities meet their health, welfare, and Jewish educational needs.

ETHIOPIA

During the first half of 1998, almost all the Felas Mora whom JDC had been caring for in Addis Ababa left for Israel, having received immigration approval from the Israeli government for humanitarian reasons. The Felas Mora are descendants of Jews who converted to Christianity, and many have relatives among the Ethiopian Jews who have made aliya. Up until their departure, these Felas Mora continued to benefit from JDC's assistance efforts; these included monthly cash grants, food distribution, social services, medical care at the JDC clinic in Addis, a health education program, and a nutrition program for malnourished children.

These programs were run by Ethiopian staff, with an American physician based in Addis in charge of the clinic and a senior JDC social worker traveling frequently to Addis to oversee social services. The assistance effort was carried out at the request of the Israeli government and was coordinated in Ethiopia with the Israeli Embassy and with representatives of the Israeli Interior Ministry and the Jewish Agency.

JDC continues to assist Jews eligible to go to Israel by providing cash grants, housing, and medical care. Although the clinic in Addis was closed in mid-year, JDC has continued to provide medical assistance (via private clinics) to thousands of additional Felas Mora who have moved to Gondar and Addis and to several thousand Quara Jews, most of whom are awaiting approval of their applications for aliya.

INDIA

Early this past February, the members of the 1999 JDC Board Mission to India dedicated a new Jewish Community Center in Bombay, a wonderfully renovated facility that has been generously endowed by the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation. The establishment of this JCC is the culmination of a decade-long JDC effort to initiate a variety of informal Jewish educational and cultural programs for this community. This effort has been mounted by a series of expatriate staff members, rabbi/educators, and Jewish Service Corps volunteers who have worked alongside an extraordinary country manager and a dedicated group of local staff members and community volunteers.

The programs they have instituted include after-school and weekend youth activities; Shabbat and Jewish holiday celebrations and seminars; Sunday school classes for children and workshops for their parents; weekend and vacation camps for youngsters and families; young leadership camps and other training programs; community seminars and classes in Hebrew, Judaism, and other Jewish subjects; Rosh Chodesh prayer groups and other special programs for women; a Golden Age Club; and the King Solomon Business Club. JDC has also established Jewish libraries in five localities, with its Bombay library—the country's largest—moving this year to the new JCC.

Most of these activities were based until now in JDC's overcrowded Bombay office, with programs and events regularly oversubscribed. The new JCC provides a whole new venue for community programming, and its more central location was purposely chosen to make it more accessible by rail to the large number of Jews living further out in the industrial suburbs.

Through the JCC, JDC is hoping to attract Jews who have not yet been touched by its activities. Its underlying aim is to uncover more of the hidden talents in this community and identify a pool of individuals for future leadership training.
Meanwhile, four new candidates from India are participating this year in the Israel-based Buncher Leadership Program. Buncher alumni have been playing a critical role in advancing JDC's efforts in India, although some have subsequently made aliyah. This new, more mature group of candidates includes a blind individual and his wife, both of whom have been mainstays of JDC's all-important corps of local volunteers. JDC also sent a sofer (scribe) from Bombay and a cantor from Ahmedabad to Israel last year for more extended periods of study.

*Kol India*, JDC's quarterly news magazine, has become an essential means of reaching out to this widely-scattered Jewish population, whose modest numbers are always in danger of being lost amid the massive size of the general population. The magazine is giving some 1,000 families a new sense of community, alerting them to upcoming programs and spotlighting recent activities and events of Jewish interest at home and abroad. It also includes a question and answer column and feature articles on Jewish subjects geared to children and adults.

Welfare is another important area of JDC activity in India, with 136 mostly elderly individuals currently receiving cash assistance from JDC and a two-person team of social workers conducting an active program of home visitation. The Jewish social worker who recently joined this team is hoping to add some Jewish programming elements to these welfare activities.

*Bayit*, the small home for the aged maintained by JDC in Manpada, continues to receive rave reviews in a society that places great value on caring for the indigent elderly. The warm family atmosphere in this facility, which was renovated and equipped with the generous support of the Weinberg Foundation, is especially apparent in the Shabbat and holiday celebrations that have brought delighted residents together with their neighbors, JDC staff, and community volunteers.

In Bombay itself, JDC's Golden Age Club is thriving; it currently has about 100 members, and its program this past year focused on preventive medical and dental care. JDC continues to sponsor a monthly medical clinic in Alibag for the Jews living in the Konkan coast villages, with a volunteer doctor directing the clinic. JDC has been combining these clinic days with informal Jewish educational programs for children and adults that are usually geared to the holiday calendar.

JDC's local Advisory Committee, under the devoted leadership of its first chairman, who assumed his new office last September, is a well-educated, experienced group of individuals who represent all segments of India's Jewish population. Committee members are dedicated to furthering JDC's objectives and are proud to be working on its behalf.

An American-Israeli rabbi brought to India by JDC for part of 1997-1998 made an important contribution to JDC's programs, enriching them as well as community members with his Judaic teaching and insights. Since his departure, JDC has been relying more on a young Indian from Thane whose rabbinical studies in Israel it is helping to support; the student rabbi has been returning to India for three months a year to give JDC a hand in the spiritual and Jewish educational fields.

In the latter arena, JDC-India's latest Jewish Service Corps volunteers have put their own distinctive imprimatur on the record of accomplishment set by their 11 predecessors, who have been a gold mine of Jewish knowledge and dynamism in India. Their efforts received an additional boost this spring from the 1998-99 Ralph I. Goldman Fellow. During his brief stay in India, he participated in a variety of community activities and classes and supervised the kosher matza baking that has become a special JDC gift to this unique Jewish community.

**China and Myanmar**

JDC provided quarterly relief grants to three elderly individuals in CHINA last year, while in MYANMAR it assisted seven impoverished members of the remnant Jewish community in Yangon.
ARGENTINA

The still unsolved bombings of the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and the AMIA building in 1994 continue to have a depressant effect on this Jewish community, as does Argentina's ongoing recession, which deepened further this spring. The economic crisis has had a severe impact on the Jewish middle class, many of whose members have joined the ranks of the country's "new poor." Those who have lost their jobs find that new positions—if available at all—typically pay much less than their previous ones did. This has created a tremendous need both for immediate assistance and for guidance in developing new ways to supplement family incomes.

Over the past few years, JDC has helped bring community members and institutions together in two major initiatives to meet this need: the Volunteer Network and the Coalition Against Poverty. Six outreach centers, each providing welfare assistance and the aid of professional social workers in various parts of Buenos Aires and its suburbs, are currently providing life-saving services to the poorest segments of the Jewish community. An additional 24 volunteer-run centers offer help with food, shelter, clothing, medical, and dental needs. Overall, these programs, through the efforts of 850 volunteers—including 400 teenagers—are providing direct services to some 5,000 people, 63 percent of whom can be categorized as the "new Jewish poor."

New initiatives in 1998 included the addition of a Jewish barter club to the 60-club network established in Argentina in an effort to help the unemployed. These clubs provide an opportunity for unemployed individuals to produce small items for sale—and add to their family's income—while learning new skills, and they give small businesses a quick way to expand their capacities. Since the Jewish club's opening last May, about 1,500 people have been taking part in its activities each month. Children too having been feeling the economic strain, and last June volunteer teachers began two new programs for them: a football school and a sports program for the visually impaired.

JDC was involved last year in the launching of what will hopefully become a series of micro-
ARGENTINA
Jewish Population: 220,000
JDC Appropriation: $171,700

CUBA
Jewish Population: 1,700¹
JDC Appropriation: $142,800

GENERAL LATIN AMERICAN PROGRAMS
JDC Appropriation: $936,100

¹ Figure is approximate.

JDC’s Objectives in Latin America

- JDC aims to strengthen the capacities of the Latin American Jewish communities to address problems which affect them individually or collectively.

- It does this by responding to the communities’ requests for technical assistance and by helping them to mobilize and make the fullest use possible of their own resources. This is one of the many examples of JDC’s involvement in Community Development.

- Since Latin American Jewry is able to finance, albeit with increasing difficulty, its own institutions and services, JDC generally provides only seed money for innovative, standard-setting model projects, with all financial commitments of limited duration. These funds have generally produced a multiplying effect equivalent to 250 percent of the initial contribution.

- JDC promotes regional meetings and cooperative exchange and coordination among communities, and it assists in the development of the smaller communities. It seeks to make strong Jewish communities even stronger and encourages them to reach out to their weaker and more isolated neighbors.

- JDC promotes efforts to maximize human resources through training programs for lay leaders and professionals, and it is helping to strengthen community organization, planning, and fundraising capabilities.

- In Cuba, JDC is working in partnership with the local community to promote Jewish knowledge, advance the reestablishment of Jewish culture and religion, and rebuild communal structures; it is also helping to meet basic needs for food and medicines.

- In Argentina, JDC has responded to the social welfare needs created by the increasing impoverishment of the Jewish middle class by helping to establish a network of volunteers and self-help programs.
business enterprises. A group of 10 Jewish women started a challah-baking project that has already become a commercial success, while a second venture involving mail delivery is in its start-up phase. JDC is currently helping to develop more such enterprises to provide the additional sources of income desperately needed by so many Jewish families.

Because Argentina is home to Latin America's largest Jewish population, it is an ideal place for developing and testing new program initiatives, which can then be adapted for use elsewhere in the region. Developing new strategies for fundraising is a good example of this process, and a particular challenge at a time when both the economy and membership in Jewish communal institutions have been on a long decline. The failure of two banks that had been major sources of community support made the development of a successful campaign for local needs even more imperative.

In April 1998, following a visit by JDC President Jonathan W. Kolker and a VIP mission from the Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, the Baltimore Federation agreed to spearhead an effort to strengthen the fundraising capacity of Argentina’s Tzedaka Foundation, a key partner in the Coalition Against Poverty. Foundation leaders traveled to Baltimore last October to observe how a unified campaign is run. Over the next two years, executives and lay leaders from Baltimore and other US Federations will provide periodic fundraising and motivational training sessions, working to adapt US techniques to Argentinean needs. Their aim is to help the Tzedaka Foundation get more Jews to support the community’s work, with the initial goal of attracting the 200 wealthiest Jewish families in Argentina, most of whom have not been involved in communal institutions.

JDC continues to be an active partner in efforts to reorganize the communal structure and relocate institutions to the areas where the Jewish community now resides. It has been encouraging mergers of facilities and services in order to eliminate duplication, improve quality and efficiency, and make the best use of scarce communal resources. Three communities on the southern outskirts of Buenos Aires have begun working together with JDC’s help: they merged their schools and sports facilities in 1998 and opened a jointly operated social assistance center.

Since January 1997, JDC has been involved in a three-year project designed to promote excellence in Jewish education in Argentina, in partnership with AMIA, the Jewish Agency, and the Rich Foundation. The project is built around a pedagogic model used with much success in Israel and France that emphasizes individualized learning and takes full account of student diversity. The model, which has been adapted to local needs, is currently being implemented in 13 Jewish schools, four of which joined the project in 1998. Marked changes in the quality of learning are already apparent, and for the first time in ten years, there has been an increase in enrollment in the Jewish schools. Efforts are under way to implement this model in Brazil, Paraguay, and Colombia.

Most Jewish educational resources used in Latin America are imported from Israel or the US, and their adaptation often proves difficult. JDC and the Tzedaka Foundation initiated a juried competition two years ago to encourage local Jewish educators to develop new materials better suited to their students’ needs. Of the 56 entries submitted, 18 were chosen for inclusion on a special CD-ROM that is being distributed to all the Jewish schools.

In its continued efforts to help the unemployed, JDC has been providing technical support for a new program run by the Hebraica Jewish Community Center which trains out-of-work community members to care for the elderly and homebound, thus answering two communal needs. In addition to its other networking functions, the Einstein Virtual Campus—a computer network for Jewish students and young professionals in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay supported by JDC and ORT—
has been playing a key role in helping new graduates and others explore job opportunities throughout these countries.

In partnership with the Federation of Jewish Community Centers of Argentina, JDC supported a series of workshops in Buenos Aires, Resistencia, and Cordoba in 1998 for over 50 lay and professional leaders, as well as a national meeting of youth leaders last August which drew 150 participants. Together with the Jewish Agency, JDC has been supporting a young leadership training program that culminated last year in a 15-day seminar in Israel. The program was directed particularly at young activists from Argentina's smaller Jewish communities in the hope of strengthening future communal leadership in these localities.

CUBA

While most Cuban Jews live in Havana, there are small Jewish communities now active in Santiago, Guantanamo, Santa Clara, Camaguey, Sancti Spiritu, Caibarien, and Cienfuegos. All have been experiencing an exciting revival of Jewish spirit, culture, and education. A new synagogue was inaugurated in Camaguey in 1999, 25 years after the last one was closed, and plans for the restoration of the Grand Synagogue in Havana have been approved.

Nonetheless, Cuba remains a place of real hardship, with severe shortages and rationing of even the most basic foods and medicines. To help meet community members' humanitarian needs, JDC has been coordinating aid activities for a multinational group of Jewish communities, organizations, and individuals. Kosher food shipments are permitted four times a year, in conjunction with major Jewish holidays, with the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Mexican Jewish community JDC's partners in this food distribution effort. Participants in the bi-monthly missions organized by UJC and by individual North American Federations have been most generous in their direct contributions to this community, which have been helping to support a variety of local projects.

For the past five years, medications shipped by JDC or brought in by members of visiting missions have been distributed to Jewish communities throughout Cuba—an effort that has resulted in significant health improvements. Community members have also benefited from the consultative help provided by the doctors traveling to Cuba as part of JDC-IDP's non-sectarian medical education program.

In its effort to foster the development of both formal and informal Jewish educational activities, JDC has trained local teachers and over a dozen youth leaders. More than 120 youngsters currently attend the Tikoon Olam Jewish Sunday School in Havana, and a new Sunday school in Cienfuegos has joined those recently established in Santiago and Camaguey. JDC has supported the establishment of a Jewish choir and an Israeli folk dance troupe; the latter has recently taken the name Emunah, the Hebrew word for Faith.

Havana's newly established senior citizens' group had 70 regular participants last year. Adult study groups were formally organized in Havana, Camaguey, and Santiago, adding to existing classes
and lectures in Judaism, Jewish history, and literature. With the help of extra-budgetary contributions, JDC has established computer centers in Havana, Camaguey, and Santiago. JDC continues to supply the community with Hebrew- and Spanish-language books and videotapes, and it supports Menorah, the Havana community’s monthly publication.

In January 1998, 30 UJA (now UJC) Women’s Division leaders from across the United States took part in Cuba’s second national Jewish women’s meeting. The conference focused on the role of the Jewish woman and was facilitated by JDC. Extra-budgetary contributions enabled JDC to organize week-long camps for some 150 Jewish youth in both March and October of last year, with youngsters from Ecuador, Mexico, and Canada joining their Cuban contemporaries. The camps were coordinated by the Jewish youth group that JDC supports, which now publishes its own newsletter, called Mifgash.

JDC continues to sponsor the communal celebration of Jewish holidays in Havana and the smaller communities, bringing in rabbis especially for the High Holiday period and helping community members to observe key life cycle events. JDC—through its local coordinators—has also been training community members to take on various roles in synagogue services, thereby helping to strengthen activities and attendance at these local institutions.

A generous contribution from the Scheck family of Miami has enabled the Havana community to establish a new training institute for young leaders, with a regular cycle of courses now under way. This will do much to help this remarkable Jewish community with one of its most pressing concerns: its continuing need to recruit and train new communal leaders who can provide a sustained level of activity for a population that is diminishing in size.

**OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES**

In BRAZIL, JDC is actively involved in the Sao Paulo community’s efforts to integrate its social service programs, serving as permanent advisor to the 15-member forum established for this purpose. Working together with the Jewish Agency and Rio’s Board of Jewish Education, JDC has been helping to implement the new Jewish educational model being used in Argentina in the Rio Jewish school system. Three of the system’s six schools and some 1,500 children are expected to benefit from this project in 1999.

In URUGUAY, where economic difficulties have had an effect on the Jewish population similar to the one felt in Argentina, JDC has been helping the Montevideo community revamp its social service department to meet the needs of its own "new..."
In addition to Havana, three other Cuban communities now have Sunday School classes for Jewish youngsters. Photo: Roy Mittelman

Jewish poor.” A volunteer network was set up in 1998, and the services provided by the community’s employment bureau have been expanded.

In MEXICO, the Activa Foundation, which JDC helped Jewish organizations establish to aid the Jewish unemployed, is focusing on the creation of new small business enterprises. Two such ventures were launched in Mexico City in 1998: one has installed small bread bakeries at key city locations, the other is providing children with a safe means of transportation to school. In May 1998, the Jewish institutional management program developed by Mexico City’s Universidad Hebraica with JDC’s aid had its first graduates—a group of 25 lay and professional leaders.

In BOLIVIA, JDC continues to provide technical support for the La Paz community’s Majon Noar, its vital informal Jewish educational effort for youngsters, while in GUATEMALA, JDC has been helping the Jewish community revamp Jewish educational and cultural activities for all age groups. In VENEZUELA, JDC helped local organizations implement special leadership training programs for lay and professional leaders last year.

REGIONAL PROGRAMS

JDC continues to support LEATID, the Buenos Aires-based training institute for Jewish lay leaders and professionals from throughout Latin America. Ongoing programs include the Institutional Directors Training Program and the Amit Training Program for Young Communal Lay Leaders, while the sixth Latin American group to participate in the Israel-based Buncher Leadership Program was organized under LEATID’s aegis last year.

A new tool for Jewish communal institutions was provided in 1998 with the launching of the LEATID Web site. This is providing an analysis of communal activities and issues as well as technical help with daily operations to Jewish institutional leaders. A quarterly publication offers the same type of help to those yet not on the Internet. In addition to strengthening local capabilities, the LEATID Web site will help to expand local leaders’ global Jewish perspective.

Contacto, the newsletter published by JDC’s Latin America office, continues to be recognized throughout the region as an important source of Jewish knowledge. In addition to information on JDC’s worldwide programs and Jewish communal events, each issue contains an in-depth exploration of a specific Jewish topic.

Fostering connections among Jewish communities is a continuing JDC priority. JDC has therefore played a key role in creating a Latin American forum similar to the North American General Assembly or GA. The most recent forum, which took place in Argentina at the end of 1997, brought together 500 leaders from 90 Jewish institutions in 14 Latin American countries—including 150 young leaders. With the widest possible range of communal institutions represented at these meetings, which are generally held biennially, JDC is currently working with LEATID to make all-important training and community development programs an integral part of all future Latin American GAs.
THE RESPONSE TO THE KOSOVO CRISIS: NON-SECTARIAN ACTIVITIES IN THE BALKANS

The Jewish community's response to the Kosovo refugee crisis that erupted this past March was both immediate and overwhelming. In a short period of time, the Jewish Coalition for Kosovo Relief and Assistance that JDC assembled had 42 members, the largest relief coalition organized to date. Contributions to JDC's "Open Mailbox" set their own record: by the end of July 1999, over $4.5 million had been received, with donations coming primarily, but not exclusively, from the Jewish community.

As in earlier Jewish relief efforts spearheaded by JDC, the activities implemented in Albania and Macedonia were calibrated to respond to both immediate and longer-term requirements of the victims. Actions taken included the distribution of a variety of emergency supplies in refugee camps, the provision of medical assistance to refugees and host families, and the establishment of a model refugee "camp" and a community-based health program.

Supplies distributed at the height of the crisis included mattresses and bedding for over 23,000 refugees and recreational activity kits for more than 10,000 children. The latter were distributed in cooperation with Catholic Relief Services, GOAL, Concern, and other agencies and were intended to give traumatized youngsters an outlet for their energy and a means of relieving their stressful situation. Some 100 children's libraries were also set up in various refugee camps.

JDC's medical director worked with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to determine

Activity kits supplied by the Jewish Coalition for Kosovo Relief and Assistance helped refugee youngsters cope with their stressful situation.

Photo: JDC
JDC’s disaster relief activities help those most vulnerable when tragedy strikes.

Photo: Marcia Presky

JDC-INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (JDC-IDP)

JDC Appropriation: $415,200\(^1\)

\(^1\)This figure includes IDP staff and overhead costs.

JDC’S OBJECTIVES FOR NON-SECTARIAN PROJECTS

- JDC-IDP embodies the Jewish principle of “tikkun olam,” the admonition to engage in efforts to alleviate suffering and repair the world’s inequities and imperfections as part of one’s moral responsibilities.

- JDC’s non-sectarian projects provide the American Jewish community with the opportunity to participate in international development efforts and respond to natural or man-made disasters, and they involve local Jewish communities wherever feasible.

- JDC does not use regular program funds to support its non-sectarian efforts. Rather, it provides a small amount of seed money that it leverages with funding secured from the US and other governments, international agencies, and private foundations and donors. Projects have also benefited from the pro bono services of American Jews and from a variety of in-kind corporate contributions.

- For disaster relief overseas, JDC’s “Open Mailboxes” provide a mechanism through which the Jewish and general public can participate in emergency responses. JDC has also organized and coordinated the work of coalitions formed to respond to various crises on behalf of a range of Jewish organizations, both US and foreign.

- By using Israeli experts as much as possible in its work, JDC enables developing countries throughout the world to benefit from Israel’s own development experience and its agricultural and technological innovations and products. This also helps to cement Israel’s role as a provider of quality assistance abroad.

- Training is an essential part of all JDC development efforts and is intended to enhance the self-reliance of local partners and ensure that projects will continue after JDC’s departure. Projects often involve both government agencies and non-governmental organizations to encourage cooperation and ensure the best use of scarce resources.
medical priorities in Albania. The clinics subsequently set up by JDC and various partner agencies have provided medical care to over 10,000 refugees and to many of their equally impoverished Albanian host families. Staffing has been provided by local medical professionals and by Israeli and American volunteers; many of the latter are part of the “Medical Registry” activated by JDC as part of its crisis response. In partnership with the IRC, JDC also established a community-based health program in the Cair district of Macedonia, using local professionals to provide primary and preventive health services to refugees and their hosts.

The model refugee “camp”—actually two residences—set up by JDC in Elbasan, Albania, offered a variety of educational, recreational, and therapeutic activities, including special sessions for children taught by three refugee teachers. Since the Elbasan site is one of the few winterized facilities available to refugees, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has asked JDC to keep it in operation for those who will be left behind as the repatriation process continues. JDC has also complied with the UNHCR’s request that it participate in medical assistance efforts for refugees returning to Kosovo.

This Coalition-aided Child Survival Center in Honduras is helping some of Hurricane Mitch’s smallest victims. Photo: Laina Richter

At the Stankovic I refugee camp in Macedonia, June 1999. Photo: Will Recant

Originally planned to take place in Albania, this vocational training effort will now be transferred to Kosovo, giving returning refugees the chance to learn new skills that will help them to rebuild their lives and provide for their families.

With the repatriation process well under way, JDC, on behalf of the Coalition, is currently developing additional activities in Kosovo to assist those who have returned. It will also continue to aid the refugees who remain in Albania and Macedonia, many of whom are among the most vulnerable—the sick, the poor, and the elderly—and most in need of long-term help.

HURRICANE MITCH: RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Hurricane Mitch, which ripped through Central America in October 1998, left over 11,000 dead and hundreds of thousands homeless. The area’s worst natural disaster in this century, the storm caused at least $5.4 billion in damages and destroyed 30 percent of the area’s health infrastructure.

US, Canadian, and British Jews responded as soon
as the hurricane hit, leading JDC to organize the Jewish Coalition for Hurricane Mitch Relief, which brought together 18 Jewish organizations in North America and the UK. By the end of 1998, over $750,000 had been raised by Coalition members for projects in the most severely affected countries: Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

In coordinating disaster relief, JDC-IDP generally works in partnership with agencies that operate long-term programs in the affected area to assure an efficient and effective response. In this instance, eight Central American partner agencies with established distribution networks and successful programs were selected to provide pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, food, and emergency shelter equipment with funds provided by the Coalition.

In the months since the disaster struck, these agencies have been helping to plant crops to ward off starvation, restore safe water supplies and sanitation systems, reconstruct roads and bridges, renovate and equip medical clinics, rebuild homes, re-open small village banks, and re-establish small businesses, all with the aid of Coalition funds. The extreme poverty in which the majority of Mitch's victims live has put them in need of continued assistance as they strain to rebuild their lives and their communities. Mindful of this, and of the fact that much of the devastation is still unrepaired, JDC-IDP staff members conducting a field evaluation this past April included recommendations for additional Coalition efforts in the year ahead.

**MIDDLE EAST HEALTH PROJECTS**

JDC, through its Special Middle East Program, implements a variety of projects in the field of health, an area in which it has acquired considerable expertise. By developing new health services and infrastructures and facilitating professional interchange, the program aims to better the lives of citizens of the region and promote regional cooperation.

Experts from JDC-Israel and the JDC-Brookdale Institute, working in partnership with the Palestinian Ministry of Health, completed a four-year effort in 1998 to improve the health of Palestinian school-children by teaching them health-promoting behavior. With funding from the World Bank and the Rich Foundation and technical support from the Israel Ministry of Health, over 380 primary school teachers were trained as health educators, educational materials were developed and distributed to children and families, and health committees were established in the local schools.

The project's success, as confirmed by a final evaluation funded by the Lapid Trust, led to a decision to adapt the model to the needs of Palestinian adolescents, to help them develop the habits and attitudes that lead to a healthy lifestyle. With seed money from the European Union and the Rich Foundation and the Palestinian Ministry of Health as a full partner, project development is currently under way. At the same time, the JDC-Brookdale Institute and Bar-Ilan University, in cooperation with the Gaza Health Services Research Center and Al-Quds University, are implementing a cross-cultural study of health behavior among Palestinian and Israeli adolescents. Supported by the Rich Foundation and the USAID-MERC Program, the study will produce a database that can be used to increase the effectiveness of health education programs throughout the region.

With funding from the CRB Foundation and the Japanese government, JDC, the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees, and Yad Sarah are engaged in a three-year project to establish centers for the loan of medical equipment and assistive devices in Gaza and the West Bank. This will help Palestinians with disabilities or chronic illnesses maintain their independence and avoid costly institutional care. A model regional center was opened in Ramallah on March 1, 1999; its services include home visits and a workshop for equipment maintenance and repair.
Seed money from the Rich Foundation has made possible the development of a pilot project to aid the estimated 2,800 children under six with developmental disabilities currently living in the Hebron region. Palestinian professionals will be trained to evaluate the children and begin to provide the assistance they need, building on the methods pioneered by JDC in Israel’s network of Child Development Centers.

With Israel estimated to have 2,400 new cases and 800 women dying from breast cancer each year, the Women’s Health Empowerment Project was launched in 1997 to introduce the self-help activities developed by American women with breast cancer that have proven successful in the United States. The project, which was modeled on a USAID-assisted program implemented by JDC in the Czech Republic, was established by JDC in partnership with SHARE (Self Help for Women with Breast or Ovarian Cancer), the Israel Association for the Advancement of Women’s Health, and the Israel Cancer Association. Funding was provided by Andrea and Charles Bronfman, with in-kind donations from the project partners.

A series of workshops and conferences facilitated by American women from SHARE and their Israeli counterparts over the past two years has led to the establishment of hotlines, support groups, community outreach activities, and early detection programs for all those in Israel who are fighting this disease. The project’s success has resulted in an invitation for JDC and SHARE to participate in a new breast cancer program in Ukraine.

**TURKEY**

A new JDC-IDP project launched on March 1, 1999 seeks to improve the quality of life of working children and their families in Diyarbakir, a city in the country’s poor southeast region, which has been experiencing rapid urban growth. An influx of rural dwellers more than tripled Diyarbakir’s population in the last six years to over 1.3 million. The city’s unemployment rate is high, and most of its inhabitants have very large families and little formal education. The result is a large number of children working on the streets at a variety of menial tasks. Many of these children lack basic necessities, and all lack the time or opportunity to play and simply be children.

With major funding from the Turkish government and additional support from the International Labor Organization, this new project will offer these children nutritious meals, health care, educational and skills development programs, and recreational opportunities through a newly created center and outreach activities. Sensitizing policymakers and the general public to the needs of working children will be an important part of the project, with the aim of restoring to these youngsters at least some of the privileges of childhood.

**CUBA**

In partnership with the Cuban Jewish community and the Cuban Ministry of Health, JDC has been sending volunteer doctors to Cuba several times a year as part of a non-sectarian professional education project. The visitors are hosted by local Jewish physicians who link them with Cuban hospitals and their fellow specialists. The visitors take part in hospital rounds, give lectures, and demonstrate the latest techniques in their field. Nearly all project costs have been covered by the US doctors, who have also contributed valuable medical equipment and supplies.
HUNGARY

Training professionals who serve the elderly has become another area of JDC expertise, with a particular emphasis on strengthening community-based services that allow the elderly to live out their lives as independently as possible. Since May 1997, JDC-Hungary, the Open Society Institute/New York, the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, and the Hungarian Jewish Social Support Foundation have been engaged in a three-year project that is providing short-term training sessions in home- and community-based care for the elderly and the disabled to health and social service personnel from 20 countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Multi-disciplinary teams from Case Western and from local universities are conducting the Budapest-based sessions, with funding provided by the Open Society Fund/Hungary and the Mandel School.

UKRAINE

The elderly in Ukraine continue to live in very difficult economic circumstances, having experienced severe reductions both in government services and in the purchasing power of their pensions. In the Zaliznichny District of Kiev, experts from the Kiev branch of JDC's William Rosenwald Institute for Communal and Welfare Workers are providing training and technical assistance to representatives of government agencies and non-governmental organizations serving the elderly. The aim is to strengthen the social services available to this vulnerable population by introducing new management practices and methods of service delivery, building on JDC's experience in helping to develop local Jewish community welfare programs. Project funding has been provided by the Rich Foundation and USAID.

RWANDA

Acting on behalf of the 36-member Jewish Coalition for Rwanda Relief first established in 1994, JDC continued its involvement last year in efforts to aid some of Rwanda's thousands of traumatized children, many of whom remain isolated from their families. In April 1998, with funds contributed from JDC's Rwanda Mailbox, the International Rescue Committee was able to begin the first family reunification effort to be undertaken in the Kibungo prefecture, the site of previous JDC child welfare efforts. Support also continues for a back-to-school project in that prefecture. Some 1,500 orphans aged 12 to 18 were provided with school supplies and uniforms to enable them to return to secondary school, and school fees are being paid for the 250 neediest youngsters' four-year course of study. Israeli schoolchildren raised over $50,000 to help support this effort, and they played an important role in assembling and personalizing the packages of school supplies.

BOSNIA

In addition to the humanitarian assistance described in the Eastern Europe section of this report, JDC and La-Benevolencija have been operating a Small Business Development Center in Sarajevo to aid in reconstruction efforts. The project is modeled on the Small Business Centers developed by JDC-Israel, and over 500 individuals have successfully completed the courses. Project funding has been provided by Alfred Bader via World Jewish Relief (UK), the Open Society Fund/Former Yugoslavia, and the JDC Mailbox.

JEWISH EDUCATION

In addition to allocations for formal and informal Jewish educational programs made as part of various country budgets, JDC has historically made global allocations on a subsidy basis to the Alliance Israelite Universelle, a French organization which operates schools in seven countries, and to the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT). However, in accordance with a decision of its Board of Directors, JDC has moved from a system of global subsidies to one of country specific and programmatic funding, with JDC country budgets now including specific allocations for Alliance schools where relevant.

ORT received $3.5 million from JDC in 1998 in support of its worldwide educational and vocational training programs, which benefited over 160,000 students in Israel, Western Europe, North Africa, India, and South America. The JDC allocation, made through the American ORT Federation, assists the World ORT Union by providing subventions to its Jewish schools in countries in which JDC operates.
Independent Auditor's Report

Board of Directors
The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc.

We have audited the accompanying balance sheet of The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc. as of December 31, 1998, and the related statements of operations and changes in net assets, functional expenses and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of JDC's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As more fully described in Note 3 to the financial statements, The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc. has elected to recognize pension expense based on the method used to fund the pension plan. In our opinion, generally accepted accounting principles require that pension expense be recognized on the accrual basis, pursuant to the requirements of FASB Statement No. 87.

In our opinion, except for the effects of not recognizing pension expense in accordance with FASB Statement No. 87 as discussed in the previous paragraph, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc. as of December 31, 1998, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Loeb & Troper
Certified Public Accountant
May 13, 1999
### Exhibit A

THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, INC.

**BALANCE SHEET**

**DECEMBER 31, 1998 AND 1997**

#### ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total 1998</th>
<th>Total 1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash in interest-bearing accounts</td>
<td>11,535,724</td>
<td>6,891,560</td>
<td>18,427,284</td>
<td>129,553</td>
<td>18,566,837</td>
<td>24,920,328</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time deposit in Israel - interest-bearing</td>
<td>3,263,637</td>
<td>5,462,712</td>
<td>8,726,349</td>
<td>9,311,314</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments (Note 6)</td>
<td>5,904,411</td>
<td>137,424,205</td>
<td>137,931,616</td>
<td>74,018,868</td>
<td>10,761,442</td>
<td>186,629,903</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due from United Israel Appeal</td>
<td>6,718,027</td>
<td>6,718,027</td>
<td>13,436,054</td>
<td>222,201,515</td>
<td>186,629,903</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts and accrued interest receivable</td>
<td>1,292,371</td>
<td>1,292,371</td>
<td>2,584,742</td>
<td>46,392</td>
<td>1,356,652</td>
<td>1,070,525</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans to communities and other receivables (net of allowance for uncollectible accounts of $426,070 in 1998 and 1997)</td>
<td>1,651,251</td>
<td>1,651,251</td>
<td>3,302,502</td>
<td>1,651,251</td>
<td>2,621,007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due from employees</td>
<td>314,500</td>
<td>314,500</td>
<td>629,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>314,500</td>
<td>546,667</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advances on account of future year's programs</td>
<td>213,931</td>
<td>213,931</td>
<td>427,862</td>
<td></td>
<td>213,931</td>
<td>155,606</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interfund receivable (payable) (Note 7)</td>
<td>(1,573,401)</td>
<td>(1,573,401)</td>
<td>3,146,802</td>
<td>(1,573,401)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td>$ 24,764,443</td>
<td>$ 139,703,726</td>
<td>$ 164,468,168</td>
<td>$ 79,010,348</td>
<td>$ 162,70,546</td>
<td>$ 259,749,062</td>
<td>$ 225,155,350</td>
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</table>

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total 1998</th>
<th>Total 1997</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>$ 29,287,129</td>
<td>101,526</td>
<td>$ 29,388,655</td>
<td>$ 9,584,672</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annuity obligations</td>
<td>1,054,951</td>
<td>1,054,951</td>
<td></td>
<td>990,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loans payable (Note 4)</td>
<td>13,350,000</td>
<td>13,350,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
<td>42,637,129</td>
<td>101,526</td>
<td>42,738,655</td>
<td>10,639,623</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets (deficit) (Exhibit B) (Note 10)</td>
<td>(17,872,686)</td>
<td>139,602,199</td>
<td>121,729,513</td>
<td>68,370,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong></td>
<td>$ 24,764,443</td>
<td>$ 139,703,726</td>
<td>$ 164,468,168</td>
<td>$ 79,010,348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See independent auditor's report.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.
THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, INC.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998
(With Summarized Financial Information for 1997)

Revenues, gains and other support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Jewish Appeal, Inc. and Federation</td>
<td>$57,329,500</td>
<td></td>
<td>$9,873,447</td>
<td>$112,508</td>
<td>43,808,608</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust contributions</td>
<td>$1,516,052</td>
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<td>24,886</td>
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<td>4,832,415</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income - exchange gains</td>
<td>1,156,675</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Israel Appeal of Canada</td>
<td>1,156,675</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental extra giving opportunities</td>
<td>10,229,963</td>
<td></td>
<td>43,127,830</td>
<td>1,156,675</td>
<td>141,541</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment income (includes unrealized gains of $9,662,666 and realized gains of $3,426,300 in 1998)</td>
<td>12,157,201</td>
<td></td>
<td>12,157,201</td>
<td></td>
<td>128,981,705</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actuarial loss on annuity obligations</td>
<td>7,013,829</td>
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<td>7,013,829</td>
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<td>107,722,768</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restrictions (Note 10)</td>
<td>6,265,617</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,265,617</td>
<td></td>
<td>100,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total revenues, gains and other support</td>
<td>101,638,891</td>
<td></td>
<td>113,476,162</td>
<td>15,404,670</td>
<td>128,981,705</td>
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Expenses (Exhibit C)

Program services

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relief and welfare</td>
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<td>24,886</td>
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<td>43,808,608</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>8,899,241</td>
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<td>1,156,675</td>
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<td>26,033</td>
</tr>
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<td>Services to the aged</td>
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<td>10,229,963</td>
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<td>141,541</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jewish education and religious</td>
<td>12,157,201</td>
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<td>7,013,829</td>
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<td>128,981,705</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education and manpower development</td>
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<td>6,265,617</td>
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<td>100,873</td>
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<td>Social development</td>
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<td>12,091,773</td>
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<td>100,873</td>
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<td>Multifunctional</td>
<td>101,130,315</td>
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<td>101,130,315</td>
<td></td>
<td>100,761,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total program services</td>
<td>101,130,315</td>
<td></td>
<td>101,130,315</td>
<td></td>
<td>100,761,085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supporting services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management and general</td>
<td>6,457,912</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,710,009</td>
<td></td>
<td>128,981,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund raising</td>
<td>141,541</td>
<td></td>
<td>141,541</td>
<td></td>
<td>141,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total supporting services</td>
<td>6,599,453</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,851,550</td>
<td></td>
<td>158,523,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenses*</td>
<td>107,729,768</td>
<td></td>
<td>108,981,865</td>
<td></td>
<td>100,761,085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in net assets before other changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(6,090,877)</td>
<td>10,585,174</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,494,297</td>
<td>15,404,670</td>
<td>19,999,840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other changes in net assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer for deficit reduction</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer for operating fund programs</td>
<td>4,440,900</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in net assets (Exhibit D)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>350,023</td>
<td>4,144,274</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,494,297</td>
<td>15,404,670</td>
<td>19,999,840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Net assets (deficit) - beginning of year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(18,222,709)</td>
<td>135,457,925</td>
<td></td>
<td>117,235,216</td>
<td></td>
<td>128,981,705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Net assets (deficit) - end of year (Exhibit A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Legacy Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$(17,872,668)</td>
<td>$135,602,199</td>
<td></td>
<td>$121,729,513</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100,761,085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes interest expense of $1,400,000

See independent auditor’s report.
The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.
### Exhibit C

#### THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, INC

#### STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

#### YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Services</th>
<th>Supporting Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management and General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to local communities</td>
<td>$ 11,890,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash assistance to the elderly</td>
<td>998,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and clothing for needy individuals</td>
<td>18,777,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewishe educational materials</td>
<td>137,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine and medical services for the needy</td>
<td>4,791,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious supplies</td>
<td>5,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of communal workers</td>
<td>330,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional fees</td>
<td>69,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual memberships in communal organizations</td>
<td>18,185</td>
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<tr>
<td>Books and publications</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer supplies and services</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>11,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and bank charges</td>
<td>499,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupancy, warehousing, repairs and equipment</td>
<td>924,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office supplies, postage and duplicating</td>
<td>23,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll, social security, benefits and consultants</td>
<td>1,777,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public information and education</td>
<td>67,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental retirement benefits</td>
<td>510,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone and fax</td>
<td>122,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>122,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>365,328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total (Exhibit B)** | **$ 40,042,465** | **$ 8,099,241** | **$ 14,669,189** | **$ 12,757,801** | **$ 2,013,829** | **$ 8,265,617** | **$ 12,081,773** | **$ 101,130,315** | **$ 7,710,009** | **$ 14,141,541** | **$ 7,851,550** | **$ 108,981,865**

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See independent auditor's report.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.
THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, INC.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998

Cash flows from operating activities

Change in net assets (Exhibit B) $ 19,999,840

Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities

Permanently restricted contributions (74,840)
Permanently restricted investment income (26,033)
Contributions restricted for annuity agreements (112,508)
Realized and unrealized gains on investments (13,088,966)
Actuarial loss on annuity obligations 3,222

Decrease (increase) in assets

Due from United Israel Appeal (6,718,027)
Accounts and accrued interest receivable (266,127)
Loan to communities and other receivables 969,756
Due from employees 233,167
Advances on account of future year's programs (58,325)
Increase in liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued expenses 7,179,821

Net cash provided by operating activities 8,019,880

Cash flows from investing activities

Purchase of investments (100,990,775)
Sale of investments 79,093,094

Net cash used by investing activities (21,897,681)

Cash flows from financing activities

Repayment of loan (6,000,000)
Proceeds from loans 13,350,000
Permanently restricted contributions 74,840
Permanently restricted investment income 26,033
Payment of annuity obligations (103,024)
Proceeds from contributions restricted for investment subject to annuity obligations 276,361

Net cash provided by financing activities 7,624,210

Net decrease in cash (6,253,491)

Cash - beginning of year 24,820,326

Cash - end of year $ 18,566,837

Supplemental disclosure of cash flow information

Cash paid during the year for interest $ 789,605

See independent auditor's report.
The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.
THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, INC.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 31, 1998

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc. was established in 1914 to channel funds being raised to aid Jews in Europe and Palestine. Today, over 80 years later, The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc. is still serving as the overseas arm of the American Jewish Community sponsoring programs of relief, rescue and reconstruction to meet Jewish needs around the globe.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee is supported primarily by support from United Jewish Appeal, Inc. and general contributions.

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements are prepared on the accrual basis.

Appropriations for grants are expensed in the year authorized.

The U.S. dollar equivalents of the local currencies were calculated either at the actual rates of exchange realized or at an average of the rates during the year.

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

The financial statements include prior-year summarized comparative information in total, but not by net asset class. Such information does not include sufficient detail to constitute a presentation in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. Accordingly, such information should be read in conjunction with JDC's financial statements for the year ended December 31, 1997, from which the information was derived.

Investments are stated at fair value, which is determined by quoted market prices.

The cost of providing services have been summarized on a functional basis. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the programs and supporting services for which the costs have been incurred.

NOTE 3 - PENSION PLAN

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) has a noncontributory defined benefit pension plan covering its New York staff and overseas foreign service personnel. For 1998 and 1997, no pension contributions were required to satisfy the minimum funding requirements of the IRS. Prior service cost has been fully funded. The JDC's policy is to fund pension cost accrued. As of January 1, 1998, there were 74 participants.

NOTE 4 - LOANS PAYABLE

JDC has a credit line with Bank Leumi Trust Company of New York of $17,500,000. JDC will pay interest on the outstanding balance at 4% above the LIBOR rate. The outstanding principal balance at December 31, 1998 is $8,850,000. The interest rate is 6.02% at December 31, 1998.

JDC obtained a $12,000,000 loan on September 14, 1994 from Bank Leumi Trust Company of New York. The loan will be repaid in eight annual installments of $1,500,000 commencing August 30, 1994 and concluding August 31, 2001. JDC will pay interest on the outstanding balance at 4% above the LIBOR rate. The outstanding principal balance at December 31, 1998 is $4,500,000. The interest rate is 6.08% at December 31, 1998.

JDC has pledged unrestricted investments held in the Bank Leumi custodian account with a market value of approximately $27,070,150 as collateral for the line of credit and loan from Bank Leumi.

JDC has a credit line with Chase Manhattan Bank of $17,500,000. JDC will pay interest on the outstanding balance at 4% above the LIBOR rate. The outstanding principal balance at December 31, 1998 is $4,500,000. The interest rate is 6.02% at December 31, 1998.

NOTE 5 - LEASE COMMITMENTS

JDC is committed under a lease for office space which expires December 31, 2000. Minimum rental commitments under the terms of the lease are $400,860 per annum, subject to adjustments for escalation.

NOTE 6 - INVESTMENTS

| U.S. Government obligations | $ 89,981,210 |
| State of Israel bonds | 4,057,930 |
| Corporate bonds | 307,480 |
| Common and preferred stocks | 118,601,027 |
| Mutual funds | 9,253,868 |
| **Total** | **$ 222,201,515** |
NOTE 7 - INTERFUND RECEIVABLE (PAYABLE)

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc. entered into a $3,000,000 ten-year loan agreement with JDC-Israel Brookdale Institute of Gerontology and Adult Human Development on April 1, 1994. The outstanding principal balance at December 31, 1998 is $1,573,401, which includes accrued interest of $91,323. The principal amount of the loan will bear fluctuating interest at a rate of 1% in excess of the highest alternative interest rate that the Brookdale Institute can receive from Israeli banks at the beginning of each month on a compound interest basis. At December 31, 1998, the interest rate is 5.39%. The schedule for payment of the loan and interest will be based on an annual principal reimbursement of $300,000 plus the annual interest calculated at the rate adopted each year. Payment of principal and interest shall be made in U.S. dollars at the end of each year of the period of the loan beginning March 31, 1994.

NOTE 8 - CONCENTRATION OF CREDIT RISK

Financial instruments which potentially subject The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc. to a concentration of credit risk are cash accounts with major financial institutions in excess of FDIC insurance limits. These financial institutions have strong credit ratings and management believes that credit risk related to these accounts is minimal.

NOTE 9 - FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The following methods and assumptions were used by The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc. in estimating the fair value of its financial instruments:

Cash - The carrying amount reported in the balance sheet approximates fair value because the instrument is liquid in nature.

Time deposit in Israel - The carrying amount reported in the balance sheet approximates fair value due to the short-term nature.

Investments - The fair value is based upon quoted market prices.

Loans to communities and other receivables - The carrying amount reported in the balance sheet approximates fair value because the instruments are due on demand.

Due from employees - The carrying amount reported in the balance sheet approximates fair value because the interest rate is similar to rates currently offered.

Annuity obligations - The fair value is estimated by discounting future cash flows using rates currently offered.

Loans payable - The carrying amount reported in the balance sheet approximates fair value because JDC can obtain similar loans at the same terms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carrying Amount</th>
<th>Fair Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$ 18,566,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time deposit in Israel</td>
<td>8,726,349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>222,201,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans to communities and other receivables</td>
<td>1,651,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due from employees</td>
<td>314,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annuity obligations</td>
<td>1,054,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans payable</td>
<td>13,350,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE 10 - TEMPORARILY AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Temporarily restricted net assets at December 31, 1998 are available for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relief and welfare</td>
<td>$ 27,348,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>5,879,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services to the aged</td>
<td>9,913,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish education and religious</td>
<td>8,204,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and manpower</td>
<td>4,717,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social development</td>
<td>4,170,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifunctional</td>
<td>6,726,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annuity trust agreements</td>
<td>1,409,176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total temporarily restricted net assets at December 31, 1998: $ 68,370,725

During 1998, temporarily restricted net assets were released from restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the following restricted purposes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relief and welfare</td>
<td>$ 17,546,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>3,457,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services to the aged</td>
<td>6,266,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish education and religious</td>
<td>5,186,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and manpower</td>
<td>2,982,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social development</td>
<td>2,636,364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifunctional</td>
<td>5,143,072</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total temporarily restricted net assets released: $ 43,219,086

Permanently restricted net assets at December 31, 1998 are restricted to investment in perpetuity, the income from which is expendable to support:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relief and welfare</td>
<td>$ 3,176,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services to the aged</td>
<td>1,805,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish education and religious</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and manpower</td>
<td>273,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifunctional</td>
<td>10,915,176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total permanently restricted net assets at December 31, 1998: $ 16,270,546
1998 Program Budget

Distribution by Program Area

- Relief & Welfare: 23%
- Health Services: 8%
- Services To The Aged: 9%
- Jewish Education: 4%
- Manpower Development: 11%
- Social & Community Development: 7%
- Religious Activities: 7%
- Multifunctional: 8%
- Program Operations: 23%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Honorary Board Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRESIDENT</strong></td>
<td>Robert Abrams</td>
<td>Dr. Abram J. Abelew, New York, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan W. Kolker</td>
<td>Alan Batkin</td>
<td>Philip Belz, Memphis, TN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT</strong></td>
<td>Newton Becker</td>
<td>Victor M. Carter, Los Angeles, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Schneider</td>
<td>Bill L. Berman</td>
<td>Rena A. Cohen, Los Angeles, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD</strong></td>
<td>Julius Berman</td>
<td>John C. Colman, Chicago, IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amb. Milton A. Wolf</td>
<td>Ellen Block</td>
<td>Melvin Dubinsky, St. Louis, MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HONORARY PRESIDENTS</strong></td>
<td>Andrea Bronfman</td>
<td>Manuel Dupkin II, Baltimore, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heinz Eppler</td>
<td>Stanley Chesley</td>
<td>Heinz Eppler, Palm Beach, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvia Hassenfeld</td>
<td>Geoffrey Colvin</td>
<td>Raymond Epstein, Chicago, IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald M. Robinson</td>
<td>Rosanne Diamond</td>
<td>Pauline B. Falk, New York, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Taub</td>
<td>Manuel Dupkin II</td>
<td>Herman Fineberg, Pittsburgh, PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS</strong></td>
<td>Billie Gold</td>
<td>Max M. Fisher, Detroit, MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline B. Falk</td>
<td>David Goldberg</td>
<td>Patricia Gantz, New York, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbert H. Schiff</td>
<td>Yona Goldberg</td>
<td>Emanuel Goldberg, Rochester, NY*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaine K. Winik</td>
<td>Nancy Grand</td>
<td>Murray Goodman, W. Palm Beach, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HONORARY EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT</strong></td>
<td>Alexander Grass</td>
<td>Sylvia Hassenfeld, New York, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph I. Goldman</td>
<td>Barbara Gordon Green</td>
<td>Philip M. Meyers, Cincinnati, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TREASURER</strong></td>
<td>Judge Ellen M. Heller</td>
<td>Bert Rabinowitz, Boston, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Sandler</td>
<td>Ronnie Ess</td>
<td>Esther Leah Ritz, Milwaukee, WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HONORARY TREASURER</strong></td>
<td>Marvin Josephson</td>
<td>Donald M. Robinson, Pittsburgh, PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irving H. Sherman</td>
<td>Betty Kane</td>
<td>Samuel Rothberg, Peoria, IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECRETARY</strong></td>
<td>Myra Kraft</td>
<td>Howard Rubin, Boston, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Gurwin</td>
<td>Rebecca Newman</td>
<td>Herbert H. Schiff, Columbus, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HONORARY SECRETARY</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Jehuda Reinharz</td>
<td>Irving H. Sherman, New York, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard Rubin</td>
<td>Robert S. Reitman</td>
<td>Henry Taub, Bergen County, NJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSISTANT SECRETARY</strong></td>
<td>Eugene Ribakoff</td>
<td>Norman Tilles, Providence, RI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edwin M. Roth</td>
<td>Elaine K. Winik, New York, NY</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harvey Schulweis</td>
<td>Amb. Milton A. Wolf, Cleveland, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lynn Schusterman</td>
<td>Louis I. Zorensky, St. Louis, MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Irving Smokler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gloria Stone</td>
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<td>Roselyne C. Swig</td>
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<td>Andrew H. Tisch</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Esther Treitel</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth R. Varet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caryn Wolf Wechsler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marshall M. Weinberg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Wilf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harold Zlot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lois Zoller</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Larry Zusman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HONORARY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Max M. Fisher
Emanuel Goldberg*

* deceased
Board of Directors

Joseph Abrams, MetroWest, NJ
Robert Abrams, New York, NY
Madlyn Abramson, Philadelphia, PA
Bunny Adler, Miami, FL
Eliot Arnovitz, Atlanta, GA
Carol Auerbach, Philadelphia, PA
Daniel Bader, At Large
Alan Batkin, New York, NY
Hillel Becker, Montreal, Canada
Newton Becker, Los Angeles, CA
Lisa Belzberg, New York, NY
Helene Berger, Miami, FL
Elaine Berke, Los Angeles, CA
Bill L. Berman, Detroit, MI
Julius Berman, At Large
Max Berry, Washington, DC
Ellen Block, Chicago, IL
Fred Bondy, Chicago, IL
Marlene Borman, Detroit, MI
Charles Borrok, New York, NY
Arthur Brody, MetroWest, NJ
Andrea Bronfman, Montreal, Canada
David Burstin, Pittsburgh, PA
Alfred I. Coplan, Baltimore, MD
Andrea Dubroff, Orange County, NY
Louise Eder, Milwaukee, WI
Fran Eizenstat, At Large
Maxwell Engelberg, New York, NY
Henry Everett, At Large
Jake Farber, Los Angeles, CA
Melvyn Fisher, Cincinnati, OH
Dr. Spencer Foreman, At Large
Michael Fuertman, At Large
Rochester, NY
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1998 Annual Report  
with 1999 Program Highlights

Written and Edited by Ilana Stern

Designed by Chase/Temkin & Assoc., Inc.

Project Manager Miriam Feldman

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