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CROWN HEIGHTS JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

REPRESENTING ALL JEWISH COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONS & SYNAGOGUES

Chairman of the Board
MENDEL SHEMTOV

Executive Director
RABBI YISROEL ROSENFELD

Executive Committee
HERSCHEL MOSKOWITZ
ABBA PALTIEL
NOCHUM PINSON
RABBI DOVID FISHER

1695 PRESIDENT STREET
BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11213
TEL: 467-0166

387 KINGSTON AVENUE
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THE CROWN HEIGHTS JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL:

Grass Roots Action for Neighborhood Redevelopment

1. ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Crown Heights occupies a 90 square block area in Central Brooklyn populated by 80,000 persons. Approximately 70 percent of the residents of this designated primary poverty area are Black and Hispanic and 30 percent are Jewish, including Russian emigres, Israelis, and Iranian children and teenagers. The vast majority of the neighborhood's Jews are Lubavitcher Chassidim, part of the worldwide Lubavitch Movement whose leader, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, resides in the area.

The Crown Heights Jewish Community Council (CHJCC) has been serving the neighborhood and its residents for the past 18 years. As a result of the Johnson Administration's Great Society legislation, 28 New York City neighborhoods were designated primary poverty areas, thus eligible for targeted social welfare programming. In response to the need for a local organization to coordinate this neighborhood effort, community leaders established the Council in 1966 as the area's anti-poverty agency to provide an array of social services to the Jewish poor.

Several years later, CHJCC expanded its mission. When Crown Heights experienced rapid ethnic change during the late 1950's and early 1960's engendered by blockbusting leading to white middle class flight, the Lubavitch community, under the Rebbe's direction, opted to remain and work for neighborhood stabilization. Toward this end, community leaders requested the Council to play an additional role in coordinating stabilization and redevelopment efforts in cooperation with other neighborhood organizations and ethnic groups.

During the past 18 years, CHJCC has developed the expertise to deliver a range of social services to residents, and has worked toward strengthening Crown Heights's residential character and public services, continually modifying its program offerings to meet emerging community need. The Council has become the major social welfare organization in the area and, although its services are targeted at the

Jewish poor, it serves members of all neighborhood ethnic and religious groups. In so doing, its leadership has worked in close cooperation with that of the Black and Hispanic communities and has developed an enviable reputation for service delivery.

CHJCC's target service area is bounded by Eastern Parkway (north), Maple Street (south), Rochester Avenue (east), and Nostrand Avenue (west). However, in addition to residents of the target area, the staff also responds to service requests from clients throughout the City. These include former Crown Heights residents (especially Russian immigrants) who moved to other neighborhoods but continue to call or visit for aid with a variety of problems, and clients referred by other agencies for assistance with specific problems, such as SBA applications, wherein the Council has developed special expertise.

2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As the neighborhood problem center whose mission is to improve the quality of life for Crown Heights's poor, the Council works to aid residents directly and to redevelop and upgrade the neighborhood's physical plant. Its goals are:

- To alleviate the effects of poverty on the underprivileged by aiding residents to gain better control of their lives and
- To help the neighborhood revitalize and redevelop itself to become a more attractive place to live and conduct business.

Respecting alleviation of poverty, CHJCC's objectives are:

- To provide underprivileged clients the information and aid they require to benefit from government-sponsored social service entitlements
- To provide interim assistance until these benefits are forthcoming and
- To assist the underprivileged in gaining the tools necessary to achieve economic independence.

Respecting community development, the Council's objectives are:

- To improve the quality and increase the quantity of the community's housing stock
- To improve business opportunities so that residents may benefit from a full array of commercial services
- To upgrade the level and quality of public services and
- To upgrade the community's physical plant.

3. ACHIEVEMENTS

During its 18 years of service to the community, the Council has developed linkages with and sponsored a variety of programs funded by federal, state and city agencies. Among these federal agencies are the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Commerce (Economic Development Administration, Minority Business Development Agency), Energy and Labor, and the Small Business Administration. State agencies include the Executive Department (Office for the Aging, Division of Housing and Community Renewal), Council on the Arts, Department of Social Services and Department of State (Division of Economic Opportunity).

City agencies include the Housing Authority, and Offices of Energy and Economic Development; the Departments for the Aging, City Planning, Consumer Affairs, Cultural Affairs, and Housing Preservation and Development; the Human Resources Administration (Community Development Agency, Department of Employment and Department of Social Services), Community Planning Board #9, Local School Board #17, and the 71st and 77th Police Precincts.

The Council's range of services extends from aid in application for food stamps to emergency shelter including:

- Information, referrals and assistance to families and individuals respecting social welfare needs.

This service includes aid in securing entitlements, housing, education, Medicare and Medicaid; establishing residency and gaining naturalization status for immigrants; and referring clients to other service providers, as appropriate. Council staff provide pre-screening for social service eligibility, aid in completing application forms and forwarding applications to appropriate agencies, and in scheduling interview and service appointments. CHJCC also provides target area residents translation services, letter-writing, and escort services.

- Homecare services including light housekeeping, shopping and running errands for homebound senior citizens and the handicapped.

- Free Passover Kitchen

For the past five years, CHJCC has sponsored a Free Kitchen in Crown Heights during the entire eight day Passover holiday for all who are in need. During Passover 1983, the Kitchen served 200 persons during each of the two Seder nights and more than 100 persons on each of the other six days of the holiday. The vast majority of the persons served were Russian immigrants. In addition, the Council distributes food packages to the needy who cannot partake of meals at the Kitchen.

- Employment Services

During the past decade, Council staff have provided a variety of employment services to area residents including job identification through surveys of want ads, telephone calls, correspondence, and/or field visits to prospective employers; pre-screening of job applicants; aid in resume preparation; counseling in interview techniques and job survival skills; job placement including scheduling and follow-up on each client interview; post-interview debriefing; and referral to appropriate vocational training programs.

Opportunity for gainful employment is central to aiding residents of a primary poverty area to gain economic independence. Minorities suffer the highest rate of unemployment, especially minority youth. There is little doubt that the resultant idle time leads to a disproportionate number of this group's members engaging in anti-social behavior, increasing the neighborhood's crime rate and decreasing its attractiveness for family living. In recent months, the Council has greatly expanded its work toward increasing employment opportunities in Crown Heights while successfully placing neighborhood residents in jobs outside the community.

In redoubling its employment efforts, the Council has secured jobs for local residents with emphasis on minority youth. As a result of the election of Rabbi Rosenfeld, its Executive Director, as State Committeeman/District Leader of the 43 A.D. and the positive publicity accorded the Council's efforts during the election process, CHJCC and its work for Crown Heights has been more widely publicized. Consequently, the Council has been able to successfully place more than 60 persons in private industry and public sector jobs paying a living wage. In some cases, CHJCC was able to create job opportunities for minority youth where they had not previously existed or had been previously unavailable or unknown to members of this group.

In addition to servicing its daily workload of social service requests, emergency aid, and neighborhood activity, the Council continues to work on successfully developing several projects and continuing development activities:

- Shelter Facility

CHJCC purchased a four-story former apartment building in Crown Heights, to be rehabilitated as a shelter/hostel for the homeless. Initial planning calls for provision of 75 private rooms on three floors; the ground floor will contain a dining room and kitchen, family rooms and meeting rooms to accommodate a

variety of programs and activities for the homeless, until they acquire alternate accommodations. The total cost of rehabilitation and furnishing is estimated at \$700,000 and the Council is planning a major fundraising campaign to bring this novel institution to fruition.

- Crown Heights Inclusion in Neighborhood Strategy Area

CHJCC is in the process of developing a 45 unit new construction residential project on Montgomery Street, most of the square block site occupied by Peck Memorial Hospital which is phasing out its Brooklyn operations. To assure successful development and marketing of the housing to neighborhood residents, the Council sought subsidized funding for the construction loan and mortgages for the resultant one-family houses from the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA). However, in order to qualify the site must be in a Neighborhood Strategy Area (NSA) and, in fact, the site was just across the border of the neighboring NSA.

Thus, CHJCC petitioned New York City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development to include the site in the NSA and after several months of negotiation won HPD approval, as well as approval from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Although the Internal Revenue Service has not yet approved the site's eligibility (IRS approval is required because the SONYMA bonds floated for the project will be tax-exempt), CHJCC anticipates that it will be forthcoming. Since the NSA will be enlarged by several square blocks based on their eligible demographics, other neighborhood sites will be eligible for SONYMA financing, thus providing financial incentive for increased neighborhood development activity.

- Small Business Administration Loans

During the past seven years, the Council has aided dozens of merchants in Crown Heights and throughout the City in applying for and securing SBA loans at

below-market interest rates. During 1983, CHJCC aided 15 merchants in applying for loans; 12 loans were successfully negotiated. The Council is the only organization of its kind in the City providing this service, thereby helping merchants expand their businesses to provide additional jobs.

- Housing Loans and Section 8 Rent Subsidy

During 1983, the Council assisted 96 clients in applying for Section 8 rent subsidy; assisted eight clients in applying to banks for home improvement loans; assisted four applicants for Participation Loan submissions; and assisted in the submission of five mortgage loan applications to banks.

- Weatherization

During the past four years, the Council has administered a Weatherization Program funded by the New York State Department of State. Due to positive program results in providing a variety of weatherization services (double-glazed windows, insulation) to income-eligible tenants and property owners in Crown Heights, the initial grant of \$115,000 in 1980 has been continually renewed to the current level of more than \$315,000 annually. More than 80 percent of these grants is expended on weatherization materials and contract labor.

In addition to providing or assuring the provision of social services to Crown Heights's underprivileged and sponsoring redevelopment activities, during the past decade CHJCC has initiated a variety of targeted publicly-funded projects. For example, in the aftermath of the July 1977 power blackout that led to widespread looting and destruction of the Utica Avenue shopping strip, the Council was instrumental in founding the Utica Avenue-Eastern Parkway Merchants Association to rebuild the burned-out businesses and foster economic redevelopment of the area. With the aid of a grant from the Minority Business Development Agency, the Association has been successful in encouraging stores in the overwhelmingly minority-owned shopping strip to reopen. Under the direction of the Council, UAEPMA

generated more than \$1 million in Small Business Administration disaster loans to help local stores rebuild.

Since 1977, CHJCC has also administered a program reaching out to the abandoned elderly poor in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brownsville and East New York, some of the worst slum areas in urban America. Since successfully demonstrating the development of an appropriate HEW-funded demonstration project to deliver services to these persons and relocate to safer neighborhoods those who so desire, CHJCC has been operating this program on a skeletal basis while seeking operating funds sufficient to meet need.

In working toward stabilization and redevelopment of Crown Heights, the Council has sponsored the rehabilitation of more than 300 units of housing; plans sponsorship of a new construction 45 unit residential project on Montgomery Street; administers Project HEAP offering energy bill rebates to income-eligible residents of Brooklyn; subsidizes the operating costs of the Shalom Senior Citizens Center to assure continued service to Crown Heights' elderly; sponsors the Chassidic Art Institute (CHAI) as a major contribution to the community's cultural life; and assures continuation of the Borough Park-Crown Heights bus service, providing increased accessibility for neighborhood residents. These activities, in addition to the Council's social service workload, are designed to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood thereby assuring its preservation.

In its role as the major social service and community development organization in Crown Heights, the Council represents more than 50 neighborhood organizations on major issues of community concern. For example, the Council represents the neighborhood in ongoing negotiations respecting construction of a district heating/congeneration plant sponsored by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and New York City's Energy Office. The proposed plant is the first such facility planned in an urban area within the United States. It will provide

electric power and heat at rates lower than otherwise available from conventional services. Inclusion of Crown Heights in its service area will directly benefit not only the residents of a designated primary poverty area but also serve to attract light industry with concomitant economic benefit to the community.

CHJCC has also been active in promoting greater understanding and tolerance among the various ethnic groups residing in the neighborhood. In 1979, it was instrumental in founding the Crown Heights Coalition, comprising the legitimate leadership of the Black, Hispanic and Jewish communities. The Coalition serves as a vehicle for discussion of and work on common concerns including the defusion of racial tension and improvement of City services.

Crown Heights is the only truly integrated low-income area in the City that has not degenerated into ghetto condition. Blacks and whites live side by side throughout the neighborhood and are learning incrementally that harmonious relationships among ethnic groups is a necessary prerequisite for working together on common interests for the benefit of the entire community. The Council is committed to continue to act as a catalyst in this process and assure that the successful Crown Heights experience serves as a model for other inner City neighborhoods throughout the country.

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CROWN HEIGHTS JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL
RELOCATE ELDERLY
(REPRINTED FROM: THE JEWISH PRESS AND
THE JEWISH WEEK)

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On the fourth floor of an abandoned, condemned building in East New York lived an elderly couple, the Silvermans. There were no locks on the doors nor panes in the windows. The Silvermans endured the winter cold without benefit of steam heat; after dark rats roamed freely through the deserted hallways as did drug traffickers and junkies. The Silvermans were the sole occupants of this abandoned building, living in an apartment strewn with clutter accumulated over five decades. Forgotten by all, they had retreated into a world of delusion. They felt compelled to remain there although all their neighbors had left, and the surrounding area had physically deteriorated and become crime-ridden.

After several meetings with the Silvermans, Crown Heights Jewish Community Council (CHJCC) staff finally moved them to an apartment in a neighborhood which afforded them a chance to live as human beings rather than as mere survivors in an utterly hostile environment.

For all elderly of Brownsville, Bedford-Stuyvesant and East New York, the day ends at 2:00 P.M. All shopping, banking, doctor's visits and socializing with neighbors is done before that hour. After 2:00, the neighborhood children are let out of school, and the elderly are deathly afraid to be found out of doors lest they be robbed, beaten or cruelly taunted by them.

CHJCC staff discovered one woman, who, due to fear of conditions on the street, had not ventured out of her apartment at all for the past ten years. She had managed to survive by throwing money out the window to passing youths willing to shop for her essential groceries, for a small fee.

The Crown Heights Jewish Community Council has long been involved in the special delivery of a large array of services to all senior citizens, with special attention to poverty-stricken and abandoned elderly residing in deteriorated neighborhoods, regardless of

Affiliated with the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty

race, religion, color, creed or ethnic origin. The Council attempts to relocate these elderly to better communities so that they can live out their twilight years in a more secure and peaceful environment. The targeted elderly population for relocation by the Council are those people currently residing in Brownsville, Bedford-Stuyvesant and East New York.

Several thousand abandoned elderly and underserved poor subsist today in fear and squalor, in Brownsville, Bedford-Stuyvesant and East New York - decayed inner-city areas in the heart of Brooklyn, New York. Bereft of all recreational, cultural and communal organizations and agencies, this surviving remnant of a once proud and vibrant community remain virtual prisoners in their slum dwellings. Surrounded by a hostile and alien culture, they are frequent victims of robberies and muggings.

The Council, the central body serving the Crown Heights Jewish community's poor, utilized its present social services infrastructure to develop an innovative Relocation Project. Project staff seek out and identify the remnant Jewish population of Brownsville, Bedford-Stuyvesant and East New York, help them acquire necessary social services and relocate those who so wish, to better housing in more amenable environments.

Brownsville, East New York and Bedford-Stuyvesant are a microcosm of the urban ills besetting metropolitan areas in the inexorable rise and fall of neighborhoods.

With the mass movement to the suburbs in the 1950's and 1960's, many inner-city neighborhoods have become intellectual, religious and cultural wastelands. Last to leave a neighborhood were the Jewish Orthodox, especially their elderly. Orthodox Jews require a large variety of institutions and facilities in order to maintain and perpetuate their religious way of life; a synagogue within walking distance from home to fulfill the obligation of daily prayer, a Yeshiva to provide religious education for their children a woman's ritualarium for the practice of family purity laws and shops that carry kosher food products. Not every neighborhood can fill these needs. Thus, the process of relocation is difficult. And the last of the Orthodox Jews remaining in these areas are the poor and aged. Within Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brownsville and East New York living in substandard housing, are several thousand isolated elderly poor often alone, surrounded by hostile neighbors. Jewish religious and cultural institutions are non-existent and elderly Jews have virtually no contact with Jewish communal life. In recent years, all

vestiges of Jewish life have disappeared as these areas have become crime-ridden allowing for survival of only the fittest. In despair, the elderly Jewish poor live in fear due to this isolation. Some have literally retreated behind locked doors, leaving their apartments only when reduced to the last scrap of food.

In April 1977, after protracted negotiations with Jewish communal agencies, the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council was awarded a six-month \$5,000 grant by the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York for initiation of a pilot project to seek out, identify, provide social services to, and relocate Jewish elderly in deteriorated slum areas. Results of this modest program led to renewal of the grant at the same funding level for another six months, and two additional renewals in 1978 and 1979 at an annual \$12,000 funding level. This funding provided for the outstationing of a part-time social worker in these areas, to identify, contact and service the Jewish elderly and aid those who so desire to relocate.

During the two year period in which Council efforts identified more than 200 previously isolated elderly, aided them in applying for a variety of social services and relocated 20 persons to several other neighborhoods, CHJCC found that the scope and complexity of the problem necessitated a far greater infusion of resources than had previously committed to successfully serve the target group and other elderly in these areas. Thus, in June, 1977, it applied for a HEW Administration on Aging \$95,000 grant to initiate a full-scale demonstration service and relocation project for the Jewish elderly in Brownsville, East New York and Bedford-Stuyvesant. With the support of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, the proposal was approved and the project was initiated in September 1977.

It met with overwhelming success. Project staff was able to reach out and service more than 300 senior citizens living in these areas, and to relocate 53 clients to other communities. Although CHJCC was unable to satisfy all clients who wished to relocate, the project developed a methodological approach and experience necessary to effectively continue this work with the appropriate financial support. Since the one-year grant was provided as a demonstration project, it could not be renewed despite the project's success.

Since October 1978, the project has been continued with minimal funding provided by CHJCC through private contributions and during this 30 month period, the part-time social worker staffing the project (funded by the Council) had identified an additional 200 elderly who were serviced, relocating 15 persons. The project currently averages one relocation

every three months. However, due to the program's success and the publicity it has received among other social service agencies, the Council is overburdened with referrals with which limited staff cannot cope.

Nevertheless, these persons must be aided for their situations are heart-rending. Since clients have been forced to subsist on garbage when their social security checks do not arrive or cannot be cashed. Others live under squalid conditions in slum dwellings that should have been razed long ago. And all require a helping hand to tend to their everyday needs including shopping, medical and dental treatment, economic aid and a variety of social services to make their lives comfortable and satisfying.

In addition to a large array of services provided by CHJCC including Medicare and Medicaid problems, stolen check replacement, utility service cut-offs and check cashing among others, the Council also transports dozens of senior citizens weekly to the Shalom Senior Citizens Center in Crown Heights where they can enjoy a day of meeting and talking to their peers; engaging in social, cultural and recreational activity; and benefitting from kosher hot meals served without charge.

During its more than seven years of service to these clients, Council staff have had to overcome a variety of problems. Probably foremost among these is to convince elderly who have spent decades in a neighborhood, have raised families and set deep roots, to relocate to a more comfortable and safe environment, despite the fact that they live in deteriorated housing and their open admission that they are in constant fear of physical violence. Project staff follow up with periodic visits to help the elderly successfully overcome the psychotrauma sometimes associated with the relocation process.

Another major problem encountered by the Council in its relocation effort was the disparity in rent between the apartments in which project clients live and the rent commanded by suitable apartments in more desirable neighborhoods. Rents in deteriorated areas such as Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brownsville, East New York are generally low and affordable by the elderly poor. However, the higher rents they generally obtain after relocation require the reallocation of resources in client budgets that barely cover essentials or rent subsidization by the Council. Therefore, staff apply for and attempt to obtain Section 8 rent assistance for clients. Until the Section 8 subsidies are approved by the New York State Housing Authority, the Council subsidizes the rent.

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The Council has provided services to hundreds of elderly in these areas and is in the process of servicing hundreds of others, thus providing the hope necessary to engender the will to live.

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1983 - 84

TARGETED PROGRAMS

CROWN HEIGHTS SHELTER

During the past 16 years of service to the Crown Heights community and underprivileged persons throughout New York City, Council staff has aided thousands of persons in a variety of ways ranging from assistance in applying for social services to rehabilitation of housing, providing the needy with comfortable apartments at subsidized rentals. In so doing, Council staff has witnessed the needy in many tragic situations.

However, during the past two years, the staff has encountered an alarming increase in the number of homeless Jews, a phenomenon non-existent heretofore. The "homeless" is a term normally associated with derelicts, junkies and ne'er do wells. But the homeless we have recently witnessed are not necessarily society's dropouts. Many are persons who have lost their jobs during the current recession, students unable to continue their education for lack of student loans, recent Russian immigrants who have been unable to adjust to a new society, and troubled youth, among others. Others are former breadwinners who left their homes after becoming traumatized by their continuing inability to find jobs necessary to support their families.

These persons must be supplied with emergency accommodations. CHJCC is now planning to meet that need. We have purchased a four-story former apartment building in Crown Heights, which is now in the process of interior demolition in preparation for rehabilitation as a shelter/hostel. The facility will provide 75 private rooms on three floors; the ground floor will contain a dining room and kitchen, family rooms and meeting rooms to facilitate a variety of programs and activities for the homeless until they acquire alternate accommodations.

The capital cost of this project, including furnishing the shelter, is \$700,000. In order to bring the project to fruition and thereby address the needs of at least some of the Jewish homeless (estimated at more than 4,000 throughout the City), the Council must raise a significant portion of this capital cost to obviate continuous mortgage payments.

OUTREACH SERVICES TO ELDERLY LIVING IN DETERIORATED AREAS

Brownsville, East New York, Bedford-Stuyvesant and parts of East Flatbush, areas adjacent to Crown Heights, are among the country's most deteriorated urban neighborhoods. Decades ago, they flourished with multi-ethnic populations served by dozens of recreational, communal and

religious organizations. As physical conditions deteriorated, the younger more mobile members of these communities moved to other areas, apartment vacancy rates increased causing downward pressure on rents, and leading to a mass immigration of the poor including many who evidenced a variety of social problems. In turn, this led to a greater outmigration of stable families and the result of this spiral are neighborhoods with living conditions among the worst in urban areas throughout the country. And living under these conditions are thousands of elderly who have been virtually abandoned in neighborhoods that generally allow for survival of the fittest only.

These elderly, including many Jewish elderly, generally live in slum dwellings; the more fortunate live in public housing apartments in fear of venturing out of the project grounds where they become ready victims of crimes such as muggings and burglaries because they are perceived as easy prey. Faced with the threat of physical and financial harm, they tend to isolate themselves from view to survive. Most often they lack the resources, will and/or ability to seek out better living conditions on their own.

Recent studies indicate that there are at least 4,500 abandoned, isolated elderly living in these areas, often bereft of family and linkages to available social programs designed to serve them. Their physical isolation is compounded by psychological insularity engendered by loss of contact with the spectrum of cultural and religious institutions which atrophied as these neighborhoods deteriorated.

Most of these elderly poor have no income other than social security allotments and their checks are often stolen from mailboxes weakened by continuous vandalization. Even when checks arrive, they must be cashed with great difficulty using maximum ingenuity to avoid being accosted by muggers who are fully aware that the old and infirm are easy targets. Under these conditions, venturing out on the street to go shopping requires a degree of courage lacking in many.

In September 1977, CHJCC was awarded a demonstration grant by the Administration on Aging of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare to identify and locate the abandoned elderly in these areas, provide them with an array of social services, and relocate as many as were willing to move to safer neighborhoods. During the one year term of the demonstration grant, more than 300 elderly were served and 50 were relocated in better neighborhoods.

Although HEW deemed the project successful and found that it had developed an appropriate methodology for providing services, it could not renew the grant and suggested that the program continue with City funding. However, the City's financial problems have precluded support. Thus, project staff was necessarily reduced to one part-time social worker paid by the Jewish Association for Services for the Aged (JASA), a grant that has also expired. Currently, staff is assigned to the project as available and thousands of elderly continue to be unserved in these neighborhoods, as the Council continues to seek the infusion of private funding to support the program.

RUSSIAN IMMIGRANT RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Crown Heights houses the world headquarters of the Lubavitch Chassidic Movement and more than 20,000 neighborhood residents identify with Lubavitch. The vast majority of these are first or second generation Russian immigrants and Lubavitch has long aided emigration from behind the Iron Curtain. Moreover, many neighborhood residents speak Russian fluently and can easily empathize with the drastic social reorientation that new immigrants must make to American life.

Due to the increase of emigration from the Soviet Union from 1975 through 1980, the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council made a concentrated effort to provide for the resettling

of immigrants arriving in the City. The Soviet Union initiated a liberalized Soviet Jewish emigration policy several years ago in order to gain most-favored-nation trading status with the United States. As a result, emigration from the Soviet Union reached a record level from 1978 through early 1980, and presently continues at a much lower rate. Tens of thousands of immigrants settled in the New York metropolitan area during this period.

In early 1979, the New York Association for New Americans (NYANA) requested the Council to develop an Immigrant Absorption Center. Established in April of that year, the Center was staffed by both part-time personnel and volunteers. Staff met new immigrants at the airport, transported them to Crown Heights and provided them with room and board for several weeks. During this initial period, they received basic orientation at NYANA facilities.

Thereafter, those who elected to settle in Crown Heights were serviced by the Council and Center staff continued to monitor the progress of others who settled in other neighborhoods throughout the City. Due to the reduction in emigration since 1981, the Center was disbanded.

Nonetheless, CHJCC continues to service hundreds of Russian immigrants residing in its target service area as well as throughout the City who continually call upon its staff for aid due to the Council's reputation for results. However, these efforts compete for scarce funding with the service needs of community residents, and continuation as well as necessary expansion of the program requires the infusion of additional resources.

The staff aids immigrant family members in securing employment, and refers adults to available vocational training programs or to agencies specializing in vocational training. Furthermore, Council staff aid these persons in securing services to which they may be entitled including Medicaid, food stamps, welfare assistance, SSI and Section 8 housing subsidies, among others; assist them in completing applications and making appointments for necessary interviews at which they are sometimes accompanied; and follow up with appropriate public and private agencies to obviate difficulties encountered by the uninitiated with bureaucracy.

Newly-arrived immigrants require personalized supportive services for several months following their arrival. Their acculturation requires achievement of familiarity with many economic and social conventions that native or naturalized Americans often take for granted including shopping, travel, payment of bills, checking accounts, schooling for children, and securing available scholarship aid, to name a few. Most important they require a constantly available source for information and guidance during this learning process, a source in which they have confidence. Council staff attempt to serve in that role under severe funding constraints.

COPY

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 22, 1983

Dear Rabbi Rosenfeld:

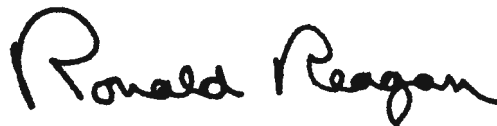
Your heroic actions last December have been called to my attention by Rabbi Jacob Goldstein.

I commend you for your efforts in helping to apprehend a dangerous criminal without regard for your personal safety.

By working together, law-abiding people can help put criminals on notice that innocent people will no longer stand by and be victimized or watch others become victims. People like you contribute greatly to our struggle against crime.

Thank you for your fine deed, and God bless you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ronald Reagan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "R" at the beginning.

Rabbi Israel Rosenfeld
Community Board No. 9
890 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11225

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January 23, 1984

Dear Dr. Breger:

I trust that by now you will have received all of the materials that I sent you. I omitted one item, which I am now enclosing: the letter that the President sent to me, a year ago.

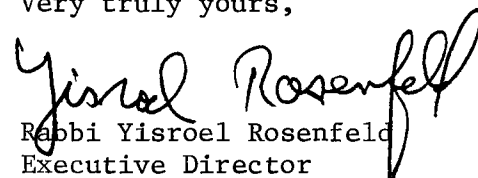
Please remember: we are seeking a meeting with the President and we are also interested in having the President as our guest of honor at our forthcoming dinner, commemorating our 18th year of service to the community.

Your assistance in these matters are appreciated.

I conveyed your message to Rabbi Yehudah Krinsky. Please let me know when you are coming to Crown Heights.

Thank You!

Very truly yours,


Rabbi Yisroel Rosenfeld
Executive Director

RJR:mr
enclosure