

ISRAEL ALIYAH CENTER, INC.

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL OFFICE
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of. Jaffe to Speak at New England Conference on Social Work in rael - April 1, 1979

The Israeli government will soon initiate a new program that will encourage American Jews who make contributions to Israel to take an active part in the actual planning and development of improvements in Israel's depressed neighborhoods. The new program will enable professionals from outside of Israel to "follow their money down to the other end of the pipe", says Professor Eliezer Jaffe, former Welfare Director of the Jerusalem Municipality and currently Senior Lecturer at the Paul Barwold School of Social Work at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Jaffe, who is originally from Cleveland, Ohio, will be the main person and keynote speaker at a New England conference on Social Work in Israel to be held in Boston on April 1. The conference, sponsored by the Israel Aliyah Center, the National Association of Social Workers Massachusetts Chapter and the Israel Association of Social Workers, will be held in Boston on Sunday, April 1 at the Brookline-Brighton-Newton Jewish Community Center, Sutherland Road in Brookline, Mass.

One of the prime functions of the conference is to expose American social workers to the many career possibilities in Israel

sociation of Social Workers for social service professionals with S.W. and B.S.W. degrees will be available at the conference. so featured will be a number of professional workshops dealing with specific social work in Israel and the possibilities for American Jews within the Israeli social workers' community. At the conference Prof. Jaffe will speak on "Fostering Social Change in Israel".

Jaffe has been instrumental in putting together the new program which calls for a billion and a quarter dollars to be raised outside of Israel, mostly in the U.S., over the next five years. Because professionals will be able to take an active part in planning the neighborhood programs for which their money will be used, a sense of solidarity with the residents of those neighborhoods will be fostered, thus strengthening the bond between Jews in Israel and Jews abroad.

Also included in the planning and implementation of the programs will be the residents of the depressed neighborhoods themselves. In the past, Jaffe says, the Israeli government has tended to be somewhat "schizophrenic" concerning the poor people it was helping. It was felt that they would hinder development programs with unreasonable and impossible demands. But this time they will not only have a voice in the planning, they will be active participants. Jaffe is very optimistic about the prospects for the success of the new approach.

Another aspect of the new program will be the "twinning" of urban neighborhoods in Israel with Jewish neighborhoods in the United States. The Israeli government has listed 160 depressed neighbor-

eally, there will be an American Jewish neighborhood paired with each one of them, so that American Jews will become personally involved in the improvement of "their" particular Israeli neighborhood.

Jaffe has also been active in Zahavi - the Israel Association for the Rights of Large Families - a group that has been effective in turning the attention of the Israeli government to the plight of large families in Israel.

"It's a fact that 9% of Israel's families are raising 40% of Israel's children. It's time that we recognized what a tremendous contribution these large families are making to the country. Jews have done enough for zero population growth. We have to help these large families and Zahavi is the best means to do it."

Zahavi numbers 8,000 member families in Israel, each family with at least four children. It is both a lobbying group and a self-help group. As a lobby, it has been successful in gaining a reduction in water bills for large families - on the grounds that large families have many children and so need the large amounts of water though they are financially hard put to pay for it. There are income tax reductions for large families today in 14 Israeli cities. As a selfhelp group it provides scholarships, money for school books and supplies and special tutorial help to children of large families.

Member families of Zahavi, says Jaffe, tend to be typical of Israel's poor. They are generally Jews from the Middle Eastern countries, have little education and live under terribly overcrowded

a vicious cycle of poverty generation after generation unless social reforms can be instituted to alleviate the problems.

Among the reforms that Jaffe and Zahavi have so far achieved is the integration of slum dwellers with middle class residents in what amounts to urban renewal programs. In the past, residents of depressed neighborhoods were resettled en masse in new housing. This new housing, Jaffe says, soon became simply a new slum. Zahavi opposed this practice and due to its proddings the Minister of Housing gave orders that in future all relocated residents of depressed neighborhoods should be mixed up in neighborhoods with middle class residents. This new procedure was followed in Haifa and the results have so far been successful.

Jaffe is the formulator of what has come to be called "Jaffe's Law", a theory that social explosions in Israel occur with clockwork regularity approximately two years after every major Israeli crisis. The reason, Jaffe says, is that as the external threat to the country's existence diminishes, the disadvantaged sectors of Israeli society turn their attention to their own poor economic situation and become increasingly adamant in their demands for a larger share of the good things in life. Jaffe warns that unless social reforms are carried out now, the lessening of external pressure on the country that will follow the peace agreements now being worked out may well result in a new social explosion within the country. In order to carry out those social reforms, he says, trained social workers are needed. American social workers can play a significant role in implementing reforms in Israel.

ADD #5

over the cost of meals, workshops, employment counseling and professional literature. Registration fees are due by March 20 and should be mailed and payable to the Israel Aliyah Center, 31 James Avenue, Boston, Mass., 02116.

For further information call the Israel Aliyah Center at (617)-423-0868.

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