

## REAGAN CUTS AND JEWS

President Reagan's proposed economic cuts will shortly be discussed at a national Jewish meeting, in order to evaluate the impact on the Jewish community.

It is common knowledge that the American government now provides more financial aid to Israel than does the American Jewish community. But it is startling to learn that significant funds now come to American Jewish welfare institutions from the government.

There is nothing charitable about America's contributions to Israel's military and economic needs. They merely point up Israel's strategic importance to the United States. And aid to Israel is not one of the items for precipitate reduction by Reagan.

The various government funds received by Jewish welfare institutions are also for "value received". Insofar as Americans are now funded by the government for such welfare needs as emigre resettlement, aged care and medical care, then Jewish Americans are proper recipients for such funds -even if they are channeled through traditional Jewish welfare institutions. However, the result is that such Jewish institutions have become increasingly subject to the vagaries of government funding.

Perhaps, to be consistent, Reagan should further liberalize tax-exemption for charitable contributions. That would help shift the burden from government to voluntary welfare institutions. As a matter of fact, the JCRC is now supporting State Senate Bill 11, which would enable an individual to stipulate charitable contributions on their state short-form, beyond the standard deduction. If you agree, you might write your State Assemblyman and Senator -and the Governor- urging their support of this bill, which the Governor vetoed last year. There is a Federal counterpart: The Fisher-Conable bill.

But while the forthcoming national meetings will be about the direct impact of Reagan's economic proposals on Jewish welfare institutions, there are political implications as well -including implications for organized anti-semitism.

As long as Reagan's program to cut government expenses and inflation is being tried -and there is no violent backlash against it- there is very little chance of serious organized anti-semitism in this country. Serious right-wing anti-semitic movements like the KKK can only succeed if they build a mass base of those who are in desperate economic plight, and who blame a "too liberal" establishment. While the New Radical Far Right is not deliriously happy with Reagan, it is not in a position to mount a mass campaign against the Reagan establishment, unless he fails. He has preempted too many of their slogans. In exactly this way did the Republican Party pull the fangs of the KKK in the 1920's.

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Of course if Reagan's program fails to stem inflation or cut government costs, *then* the New Radical Far Right might be able to launch an extremist movement, which could well be anti-semitic. And if Reagan's program results in a violent backlash from the disadvantaged, then we are in double jeopardy. There could develop an extremist left-wing movement -especially if the Democratic Party doesn't pull itself together- and left-wing anti-semitism is bigger in the world today than right-wing anti-semitism. But, in addition, the New Radical Far Right would have the opportunity to organize a right-wing extremist movement in reaction to the violent left-wing backlash. We would then have a condition reminiscent of Germany in the 1920s.

Of course, if Reagan's program works out as his economists suggest, and -soon enough- cuts down inflation and creates jobs, there will be no mass base for discontent or for organized political anti-semitism.