

**Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association
RESOLUTION**

IN FAVOR OF FREE CHOICE OF DESTINATION FOR SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRANTS

1977

Whereas throughout the history of our people, Jews have sought to help their brothers and sisters in distress with no motive other than to fulfill the great mitzvah of pidyon shevuyim - redemption of captives;

Whereas the only proved way for large numbers of Jews to leave the Soviet Union is with an Israel visa, a practice unofficially promoted by the Soviet regime;

Whereas no evidence exists that the Soviets intend to use the issuing of Israel visas for immigration to western countries as an excuse to curtail emigration from the USSR with that visa;

Whereas expert opinions, expressed by Soviet Jewish activists in the USSR and Israel, indicate a serious threat to the entire activist movement if coercive measures are taken to confine Jewish emigration exclusively to Israel;

Whereas we believe Israel's image as the center of democratic, creative and positive aspiration of the Jewish People could be irreparably damaged if it were perceived to be the source and beneficiary of the above mentioned coercive measures;

And whereas we believe it would be singularly inappropriate for the North American Jewish community, itself a product of immigration and historically a target of discriminatory immigration legislation, to hamper Soviet Jewish immigration to any country in any way;

Now, therefore, do we member of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association resolve to support the free choice of destination for all Soviet Jewish emigrants and to encourage North American Jewish agencies to continue to provide them financial aid and services as in the past, no matter where they choose to live.