

Jerusalem, November 18, 1981

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President,

Permit me to address you on a most urgent humanitarian issue:

There are now in Sudan, in various camps, nearly three thousand refugees from Ethiopia who are traditionally called Falashas. They are Jews. The legend goes that they reached Ethiopia during the period of the ^{First} ~~Second~~ Temple, meaning two-and-a-half millennia ago. For centuries they underwent great suffering and many disappeared among the Ethiopians. It is estimated that only some 25,000-30,000 are left. This remnant has guarded their faith and their ancient spiritual and national heritage. Like the Ethiopians, they are of dark complexion and as sons of our people we are dutibound to save them and give them a haven.

The immediate issue on which I address you relates to those ~~few~~ ^{several} thousand Falashas I have already mentioned who have fled to Sudan. Could you, Mr. President, on purely humanitarian grounds, raise this matter with President Numeiry of Sudan whom, I am told, you are going to meet on Friday, November 20. ^{My} ~~My~~ request is that you approach President Numeiry to instruct the proper authority ^{in Sudan his country} to let those ~~nearly 3,000~~ ^{nearly 3,000} refugees ~~to~~ legally leave Sudan. Several countries in various parts of the world have expressed their ~~readiness~~ ^{readiness} to provide these Falasha refugees with temporary permits for transit until we bring them home, which we will do within a relatively short period of time.

.../..

Mr. President, what I write to you today is a matter of salvation for these human beings. I am convinced you will wish to do all you can in order to obtain from President Numeiry a positive response. Allow me to express my gratitude in advance for your help in this, so vital and urgent a matter.

Alisa joins me in sending to Mrs. Reagan and yourself our best wishes and regards.

Yours respectfully and sincerely,

Menachem Begin