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Box 15, Folder 2, Christian reaction to Leningrad trial of Soviet Jews, 1971.


**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**


Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N. Y. 10022 • Plaza 1-4000 • Cable Wishcom, New York

May 4, 1971

Dear Friend:

We hope you will find the enclosed of interest. It documents the profound and widespread protest from Christian leadership--on every level and in many parts of the world--to the Leningrad trial of Soviet Jews in December 1970. Not only did Christians express their protests through telegrams, public statements and letters to Soviet and American government officials, many thousands participated in public prayer meetings, rallies and peaceful demonstrations.

In the context of recent strains in Jewish-Christian relations, this impressive record of Christian reactions will, I believe, have a welcome and healing effect. Hopefully, this document will provide the basis for further bridge-building between Christians and Jews.

In view of the tragic fact that the plight of Soviet Jewry will continue to require the public demonstrations of concern on the part of all people of conscience, we invite you to use this document as the basis for further programming and activities in your community. If there is any way in which we can be helpful to you in organizing interreligious efforts in behalf of Soviet Jewry and other suppressed religious groups, please feel free to call on us.

Additional copies are available on request.

Sincerely,

**Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum**  
 National Director of  
 Interreligious Affairs

 MHT:rd  
 encl.

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RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT  
HOUSE OF DELEGATES MEETING,  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PRIESTS' COUNCILS  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND  
March 15-18, 1971

ANTI-SEMITISM IN SOVIET UNION

"WHEREAS, the brotherhood we celebrate as Roman Catholic priests continually calls us to a deeper awareness of our wider brotherhood with all men, and,

"WHEREAS, the discriminating treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union and the suppression of their rights to live in accordance with their cultural and religious heritage is an injustice that summons us to speak in the name of moral and religious principle and,

"WHEREAS, the suffering of Jews in the Soviet Union, elder brothers in a special tradition, strikes at the very nerve center of our fraternal consciousness

"BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the NFPC issue an urgent call to the Soviet authorities:

1. to extend to Jews in the Soviet Union the full measure of equality to which they are entitled under the Soviet Constitution;
2. to permit Jews to live in accord with their cultural and religious heritage freely and openly;
3. to eradicate every vestige of anti-Semitism and to institute a vigorous campaign against all anti-Semitic manifestations;
4. to grant permission to those Jews who desire to do so to emigrate to Israel or to any other country and to insure the unhindered exercise of this right; and,

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this message be sent to the Soviet Ambassador to the United Nations, the Honorable Yakov Malik, and to the Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Ambassador Anatoli F. Dobrynin; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this communique be sent to our Secretary of State, Mr. William P. Rogers, and to our representative to the United Nations, the Honorable George Bush, for their information and whatever action they deem appropriate.

Addresses: The Honorable Yakov Malik  
Ambassador to the United Nations  
Soviet Mission to the United States  
136 E. 67th Street  
New York, N.Y.  
Ambassador Anatoli F. Dobrynin  
1125 16th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
William P. Rogers  
Secretary of State  
Department of State  
Washington, D.C.  
The Honorable George Bush  
United States Representative to  
the United Nations  
799 United Nations Plaza  
New York, N.Y. 10017 "

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New York, New York 10022

71-700-17

CHRISTIAN REACTIONS TO  
THE LENINGRAD TRIAL  
OF AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES



PREPARED BY THE  
INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT OF  
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Christian Responses - International	3
United States - Responses of National and Denominational Leadership	10
Community Responses in the United States	19
Christian Press Reactions	39

## Introduction

On December 24, 1970, eleven Soviet citizens, nine of them Jews, were found guilty of treason in Leningrad for the attempted hijacking of a plane. Two of the eleven were sentenced to death by the firing squad.

This event called forth a profound and widespread protest from Christian leadership on every level in many parts of the world. The protest was highlighted by assurances of diplomatic intervention on the part of Pope Paul VI, telegrams and public statements from Roman Catholic cardinals and bishops in the United States and abroad, and by the leaders of international and interdenominational Christian bodies such as the World Council of Churches in Geneva and the National Council of Churches in New York. Reactions of protest and concern from Christian leadership came from such diverse sources as the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of North and South America, heads of mainstream Protestant denominational groups in the United States, leaders of evangelical Protestant communions and associations, and the leading Arab Christian prelate in Israel, Archbishop Joseph Raya of Galilee. The Leningrad trial also elicited widespread editorial comment in the Christian press. Response within local communities in the United States was equally strong. State and local councils of churches, community ecumenical groups, associations of clergy and laymen, Christian spokesmen of distinction, and ordinary citizens joined with the Jewish community and with a variety of civic and professional leaders in a remarkable display of solidarity. Not only did Christians express their protests through telegrams and letters to Soviet and American government officials, many thousands participated in public prayer meetings, rallies and peaceful demonstrations.

Some of the protest was directed to the severity of the sentence, pointing out the cruelty of the death sentence for an action never culminated. Some comment centered around the right of Soviet Jews (and minorities in other countries) to emigrate to the country of their choice as a basic human right, and argued that the attempt to emigrate should not be labelled treason.

Some comments related the Leningrad trial to the ongoing repression of the civil and religious rights of Jews in the Soviet Union and the embracing issue of Russian anti-Semitism; others related the plight of Soviet Jews to the persecution of other communities, such as the Basques in Spain, or blacks in South Africa and in the United States.

Some drew parallels with contemporary issues such as the trial of Angela Davis or the plight of prisoners in Vietnam. Some protested the death sentences within the context of a general protest against capital punishment.

The world-wide outrage stirred by the Leningrad trial and the barbarity of the sentences undoubtedly disturbed Soviet officials. On December 31, 1970, the Soviet Supreme Court commuted the two death sentences to 15 years at hard labor, and reduced the sentences of three other defendants.

To document the depth and breadth of Christian concern on this issue, Mrs. Judith Banki, Rabbi James Rudin, and Gerald Strober of the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee, have assembled the following compilation of statements and activities, which covers the period from December 24, 1970 when the trial and sentences were first announced, to mid-January, 1971.

Because of the necessity of a cut-off date, some impressive documentation which reached us later is not included in the body of this text, such as a stirring resolution on anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union which was adopted by the House of Delegates of the National Federation of Priests' Councils, meeting in Baltimore; an expression by six leading New Jersey clergymen under the auspices of the New Jersey Council of Churches on behalf of Soviet Jewry; and a moving editorial in the Christian Index, published by the Georgia Baptist Convention -- all of which occurred in March. Possibly, some material falling into our allotted time period may have escaped our scrutiny. Nevertheless, the record, as it stands, provides a powerful expression of Christian witness to an inescapable moral issue which Jews in the United States and other parts of the world acknowledge with appreciation.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
National Director of  
Interreligious Affairs

CHRISTIAN RESPONSES - INTERNATIONAL

National Catholic News Service - December 28, 1970

Vatican City -- The Holy See will do "all in her power" on behalf of two Soviet Jews condemned to death for planning to hijack a plane in Leningrad, according to the Vatican City daily L'Osservatore Romano.

The newspaper referred to the two condemned men as "Soviet citizens" and made no mention in its brief editorial note of their being Jewish.

Eleven persons, nine of them Jews, were found guilty of treason in Leningrad on December 24 for the attempted hijacking.

L'Osservatore Romano said: "Numerous appeals, some of them from high sources, have come and are coming to the Pope for the Holy See's intervention on behalf of two Soviet citizens condemned to death at a trial in Leningrad.

"Regarding that trial a group of persons demonstrated in St. Peter's Square, in an orderly and respectful way, while the Pope was giving his Christmas Day message.

"It is well known that the Holy See does not have official relations with the Soviet Union. However, we are in a position to give assurance that the Holy See is trying, in this present case as well, all in her power to respond to the appeals received. In this she is inspired by those principles of humanity and those sentiments of Christian charity that are the constant guide to her action, without distinction of persons."

The group in St. Peter's Square was Italian Jews who held up signs that read: "Freedom for the Jews in the U.S.S.R."

The Grand Rabbi of Jerusalem and other interested groups have sent messages to the Pope, asking him to intercede.

Frederico Allesandrini, the Vatican's press officer, told NC News that the Holy See "will do all that is possible in obtaining clemency" for the two men.

He said the Holy See's actions "under similar circumstances in the past" offered assurance of this.

The L'Osservatore editorial also mentioned the 16 Basques in Burgos, Spain, who were on trial for the murder of a Spanish police official.

L'Osservatore said the Holy See was continuing to respond to appeals for clemency in the Burgos trial "for the same reasons" as those of the Soviet trial. The newspaper said the Holy See "has not ceased to display her most eager interest to the Spanish government."

\* \* \* \*

STATEMENT OF DR. EUGENE CARSON BLAKE, GENERAL SECRETARY  
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Geneva, Switzerland - December 25, 1970

On this Christmas Day I appeal to all governments to consider amnesty and pardon for prisoners, especially for those whose offenses are considered by those governments to have been of a political nature.

Today I think especially of the Jews condemned in Leningrad, the Basques in Spain, and the blacks on Robins Island in South Africa. It is of the essence of true humanity for the strong to show mercy.

\* \* \* \*

STATEMENT BY HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA READ AT FOLEY SQUARE RALLY BY THE REV. ROBERT STEPHANOPOULOS, ORTHODOX ECUMENICAL DIRECTOR

December 30, 1970

In this Season of spiritual significance, when peace and justice are emphasized in both the Jewish and Christian religious traditions, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America joins with all men in calling for brotherhood, peace and mutual understanding.

We join in this present expression of concern for Jews living in the Soviet Union, calling upon the responsible leaders of that Nation and of all Nations to guarantee the equality and security of its citizens under the law, no matter what their religious beliefs or their ethnic origins may be. We urge the leaders of the USSR to give assurances of due process of law and the guarantee of full justice under the Soviet legal code for those presently on trial in Leningrad. As believers in God's love and mercy, we petition them to show clemency and compassion in the exercise of their responsibilities toward justice. We appeal to their sense of humanitarianism and deep concern for the rights of self-determination and self-expression in this present context. As signatories of the Human Rights Convention, the leadership of the USSR is obliged in conscience to respect and implement the stipulations of this Convention, without any exception. Any latent or overt anti-Semitism should be suppressed and every systematic

effort made to dispel incidents of oppression, persecution and imprisonment of the Jewish or other religious minorities in the Soviet Union.

\* \* \* \*

CARDINAL RAUL SILVA HENRIQUEZ SENT THE FOLLOWING CABLE TO POPE PAUL VI  
Santiago, Chile - December 29, 1970

"Cardinal Villot-Vatican State Secretary: Responsive to the concern of Jewish community we beg to request Holy Father if he deems it well founded to exercise high moral value mediation asking clemency for citizens tried for attempt emigrating Soviet territory. Cardinal at Santiago Raul Silva Henriquez."

\* \* \* \*

Religious News Service - December 30, 1970

New York -- The managing editor of Religion in Communist Dominated Areas, a National Council of Churches' publication, has called on Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, the American general secretary of the World Council of Churches, for a series of appeals against repression in various Communist countries.

In a cable to Dr. Blake at his headquarters in Geneva, the editor, Dr. Blahoslav Hruby, made this plea:

"Hope that the World Council of Churches will:

"1. Vigorously demand justice for Leningrad Jews and others secretly condemned for acts not carried out;

"2. Request Soviet government (to) permit Jews (to) emigrate to Israel and other USSR citizens to countries of their choice.

"3. Include Anti-Semitism in the USSR, Poland, and other countries in WCC campaign against racism;

"4. Forcefully protest against violation of human rights and persecution of dissenting writers, scientists, students, nationalities, Baptists, Orthodox, Catholics, Moslems and other believers in the USSR and any other country;

"5. Condemn Soviet occupation of the Baltic states, Czechoslovakia and other countries."

\* \* \* \*

AUSTRALIAN CHURCHMEN ... ASK USSR TO COMMUTE DEATH SENTENCES

Religious News Service - December 30, 1970

Sydney -- Australian church leaders have cabled Soviet President Nikolai V. Podgorny urging commutation of the death sentences imposed on two Russian Jews for allegedly attempting to hijack a Soviet plane.

The churchmen also sent a telegram to U Thant, Secretary General of the United Nations, asking for U.N. intervention in the case.

Both the cable and the telegram were signed by Norman Cardinal Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney; Bishop R. W. Dann for the acting Anglican Primate of Australia, Archbishop Frank Woods; the Rt. Rev. F. McKay, Moderator General of the Presbyterian Church of Australia; the Rev. K. C. Daws, General President of the Methodist Church of Australia; and Rabbi Israel Porush, President of the Jewish Ministers Association.

\* \* \* \*

Religious News Service - December 28, 1970

Jerusalem -- Israel's leading Arab Christian prelate, Archbishop Joseph Raya of Galilee, prayed at St. Elias Church in Haifa that "Almighty God would enlighten the minds of Soviet leaders not to carry out the death sentences," which the archbishop called "awful and terrible."

Christians of many denominations responded to an unprecedented call from the Dominican Friars of St. Isaiah House in Jerusalem for a joint silent prayer meeting on behalf of the condemned Jews. The interdenomination service was held in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.

Several Jerusalem Christian church leaders cabled Metropolitan Nicodim of Leningrad and Novgorod, head of the foreign relations department of the Moscow Patriarchate who recently paid a 10-day visit to Israel.

They urged the Russian prelate to inform Soviet authorities about their "deep concern" over the fate of the accused, especially those condemned to death.

Meanwhile, protesters burned a Soviet flag in front of the headquarters of the Russian Orthodox Mission of the Moscow patriarchate in Jerusalem. Archimandrite Hieronymous, head of the Mission, called on Dr. Zerah Wahrhaftig, the Minister of Religions, to protest the demonstration.

The protesters had urged the archimandrite to transmit their petition to the Soviet government to spare the lives of the men sentenced to death.

Reportedly, the Russian Orthodox churchman declined to receive the petition on the grounds that he was a church representative, not a government envoy.

He agreed, however, to convey Wahrhaftig's message of protest to Metropolitan Nicodim.

\* \* \* \*

'AN ECUMENICAL SILENCE' THEME OF  
PRAYER GROUP

Religious News Service - January 5, 1971

Jerusalem -- More than 200 Christians of several denominations gathered in the Chapel of Calvary at the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre here weekly during December to pray for the Soviet Jews facing sentences for hijacking in Leningrad.

The prayer service, led by Anglican Archbishop George Appleton and Father Marcel Dubois, O.P., highlighted an ecumenical development which has been quietly taking shape in the Holy City for the past three years.

A small group of Christians began meeting weekly to pray for peace in the Middle East. Then they attended the liturgical services of the various denominations -- Anglican, Byzantine Catholic, Melkite Catholic, Roman Catholic, and Scottish Presbyterian.

The participants, however, felt that the lack of sacramental sharing of the Eucharist in such services emphasized the disunity of the Churches. So they developed "the ecumenism of silence."

During December the group met weekly in the Chapel of Calvary (where Protestants and Eastern Catholics have no standing whatsoever and the chapel is maintained jointly by Latin Catholics and Greek Orthodox). A half-hour of silent prayer is concluded with the Lord's Prayer said by each of the participants in his own language.

The group plans to continue the "ecumenism of silence" at other holy sites - the stations on the Way of the Cross, Gethsemane, the Dome of the Ascension, and possibly the Jewish Western Wall and the Esplanade of the Temple.

\* \* \* \*

Religious News Service - January 6, 1971

Toronto -- Christian leaders joined Jewish groups throughout Canada in appealing for commutation of the Soviet-imposed death sentences.

Roman Catholic Coadjutor Archbishop Philip F. Pocock of Toronto joined the protest against the death penalties. In a letter to all pastors of his archdiocese, Archbishop Pocock called for "prayers of your people for the reduction of the cruel sentences imposed upon those who were seeking liberation from oppression."

The Catholic prelate said that while the attempted hijacking could not be condoned, the efforts to emigrate should not be considered as treason.

The Canadian Council of Churches sent telegrams to the Soviet Ambassador in Ottawa, to Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau and to External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp deploring the severity of the sentences.

The Baptist Federation of Canada has appealed for "mercy" for the Russian Jews through the Soviet Ambassador to Canada.

Those who spoke at an interreligious rally in Toronto were Anglican Bishop Suffragan Lewis Garnsworthy of Toronto; the Rev. Eoin Mackay, associate secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches; the Rev. Dilwyn Evans, moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada's General Assembly; and the Rev. Leland Gregory of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec.

\* \* \* \*

TELEGRAM

Soviet Embassy  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada - December 29, 1970

We as a group of Christian Religious Sisters want to protest against the injustice of the Leningrad trials. We urge that the death sentences be revoked. We urge, too, that the Jews in Russia wishing to do so be allowed to emigrate to Israel.

Sister Donna Purdy  
and 12 other Roman Catholic  
Sisters of Canada

\* \* \* \*

## FIGHT FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Jewish Chronicle - January 8, 1971

London -- Protest marches and demonstrations against the treatment of Soviet Jewry were held in several provincial centres last week.

Many thousands marched through the centre of Manchester last Friday in a mass demonstration of solidarity with their brethren in the Soviet Union. Those taking part included Jewish communal and religious leaders and two well-known Christian ministers, the Rev. Paul Guinness, general secretary of the Manchester and District Council of Christians and Jews, and the Rev. Kenneth Ridgway, an executive member of the council...

In Sheffield 300 people, many carrying demonstration posters, stood on the steps of the city hall amid the Christmas decorations in silent protest. The Lord Mayor of Sheffield (Alderman Sidney Dyson) expressed his belief in the "brotherhood of man and the family of world citizenship" and condemned tyranny and restriction of freedom. Rabbi Isaac Chait protested against inhumanity and injustice and "against the vicious, savage sentences which have been imposed on those who have been guilty of no crime." Other speakers were the Provost of Sheffield, who called the people to prayer, and the Rev. Dr. Oliver Beckerlegge, secretary of the Free Church Council in Sheffield....

A protest meeting and a march through Birmingham was due to be held yesterday (Thursday). Among those taking part were the Anglican Bishop of Birmingham, Members of Parliament and other civic, religious and communal leaders.

\* \* \* \*

In addition, the British Council of Churches sent a telegram to Metropolitan Nicodim, urging him to "use your influence with the Soviet authorities to have death sentences on those convicted in Leningrad trial commuted. This Council is urging similar clemency for Basques sentenced to death in Spain."

Following the commutation of the death sentences, the Archbishop of Canterbury stated: "Christian people will join the Jewish community in gratefulness for the reprieve of the Jews sentenced to death in Leningrad, and in prayer that the coming year will be one of hope."

\* \* \* \*

UNITED STATES - RESPONSES OF NATIONAL AND  
DENOMINATIONAL LEADERSHIP

STATEMENT OF DR. CYNTHIA WEDEL, PRESIDENT,  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

January 6, 1971

As 1970 ends the National Council of Churches wishes to commend the authorities responsible for the fact that another year has passed without execution of any convicted criminal in the United States.

In particular, we wish to commend Governor Winthrop Rockefeller for commuting the sentence of all fifteen convicts on "death row" in Arkansas from death to life imprisonment. We urge the governors of all the other states of the United States in which there are prisoners under sentence of death to follow his example. We commend the government of Spain as well for commuting the death sentences of six Basque nationalists and the Soviet Union for reducing the sentences of two Jews condemned to death for planning to hijack an airplane.

Without trying to assess their guilt or innocence or the fairness of their trials, the National Council of Churches considers that no condemned men deserve such a harsh and irreversible sentence. We hope that the diminishing use of capital punishment in most nations is a trend that will be reflected in all, until the modern firing squad, gallows, electric chair, gas chamber and guillotine join the Roman cross as relics of man's earlier barbarity.

We are not as yet -- in this country or anywhere -- ready to claim that we are free from barbarity. We remember with deep sorrow the young men and women, black and white, who were killed during the year by police action in Jackson, Mississippi; Kent, Ohio; Augusta, Georgia and elsewhere, without having been tried or convicted of any crime. They were even less deserving of the death penalty.

We call upon those who bear the heavy responsibility of governments to exercise their great powers during 1971 with such wisdom and restraint that the amount of violence in our nation will be reduced and the inflicting of death by the state upon its citizens avoided.

\* \* \* \*

TELEGRAM TO AMBASSADOR ANATOLY DOBRYNIN, USSR EMBASSY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

December 29, 1970

The Leningrad trials of eleven Jews are a fresh reminder of the struggle of the Jewish people to retain their religious and cultural identity in circumstances guaranteed by the UN Declaration on Human Rights. For many Jews living in the Soviet Union and elsewhere this means the right to emigrate to Israel where their religious and cultural tradition has an honored and protected place. We support the petition of those Soviet Jews who wish to emigrate to Israel and hope that the government will make this possible.

We also are distressed to hear of the death and prison sentences ordered for the eleven Jews who were accused of illegally planning to take a small twelve seat plane and fly it abroad. It is our hope and plea that the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of the Supreme Soviet will exercise compassion in reviewing these sentences and thus eliminate the death penalties and reduce the harsh prison sentences. Finally we pray that Jews desiring to emigrate to Israel in the future will have their petition rapidly and favorably processed so that they are not driven to desperate measures.

Dr. Barton Hunter, Executive Secretary  
 Department of Church in Society  
 The Christian Church  
 (Disciples of Christ)  
 Indianapolis, Indiana

\* \* \* \*

TELEGRAM

December 29, 1970

His Excellency, the Ambassador of the USSR  
 Embassy of USSR  
 Washington, D.C.

Your Excellency:

We are greatly concerned over the plight of the eleven persons recently convicted for the attempted hijacking of an airplane in the USSR. While the seizure of any plane, though especially ones carrying passengers, is to be condemned, there are extenuating circumstances in this particular case. The defendants desired very strongly to leave the Soviet Union and go to Israel, something which the Soviet

authorities would not permit -- perhaps because of the opposition of Arab countries.

We in the United States are familiar with similar problems. Fortunately, our Supreme Court has held that freedom to travel is an important constitutional and human right. As church leaders, we have also defended on many occasions the rights of persons whose views and actions have made them extremely unpopular. We therefore respectfully, but strongly, urge that the government of the USSR permit these eleven defendants, and others so desirous, to leave the Soviet Union and proceed either to Israel or to some other country if that seems preferable. Your country and ours alike should demonstrate to the other nations of the world a high standard of respect for human rights.

Respectfully yours,

A. Dudley Ward,  
General Secretary

Herman Will, Jr.  
Associate General Secretary  
Board of Christian Social Concerns  
United Methodist Church

TELEGRAM

December 29, 1970

To His Excellency, Mr. Anatoly Dobrynin  
Embassy of USSR  
1125 16th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Your Excellency:

The severity of sentences passed upon eleven defendants accused of planning to hijack a plane for the purpose of going to Israel from Leningrad has caused grave concern within the United Presbyterian Church in the USA. We are particularly dismayed at the death sentences pronounced for Mr. Mark Dymshits and Mr. Eduard S. Kuznetsov. These sentences seem to us to go far beyond the severe punishment asked by the recent Anti-Hijacking Convention endorsed by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

As officers of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, we appeal to you to communicate our concern to your government. We plead for clemency

and for the commutation of the death sentences on humanitarian grounds. We urge that the religious motivation of the defendants is a mitigating circumstance of paramount consideration in world society, including the Soviet Union, which guarantees in its Constitution the free exercise of all religious beliefs.

Most Respectfully,

The Rev. William Laws,  
Moderator

William P. Thompson,  
Stated Clerk

\* \* \* \*

TELEGRAM

December 29, 1970

Hon. William Rogers, Secretary  
United States Department of State

Dear Mr. Rogers:

The attached is a telegram from our office to the Soviet Ambassador in the United States.

May we assure you of our wholehearted support of any approaches by our Government to the Government of the Soviet Union, which, as published reports indicate, are designed to register concern over the harshness of the sentences passed and appeal for clemency for the two persons sentenced to death.

The Rev. William Laws,  
Moderator

William P. Thompson,  
Stated Clerk

\* \* \* \*

PRESBYTERIANS' LEADERS ASK CLEMENCY FOR USSR JEWS

Religious News Service - December 30, 1970

New York (RNS) -- ...The Presbyterian churchmen cabled Metropolitan

Nicodim of Leningrad and Novgorod, chief of foreign affairs for the Russian Orthodox Church, urging him to approach the Soviet government with a plea that the sentences be commuted....The cable to Metropolitan Nicodim said: "We are not presuming to sit in judgment on the defendants' case, nor are we critical of the Soviet judicial system but we are dismayed by the harshness of the sentences, particularly in view of the religious overtones of the case.

"May we appeal to you as a colleague in the World Council of Churches to exert your good offices in communicating our plea for clemency to the authorities concerned and to approach your government with your own prayerful plea for a commutation of sentences on humanitarian grounds."

\* \* \* \*

TELEGRAM SENT TO AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN

December 29, 1970

"I am distressed that two Jews have been sentenced to death by the Soviet Union. This sentence for a political crime could be interpreted around the world as harsh and inhumane punishment with anti-Semitic overtones...

Carl E. Bates, President  
Southern Baptist Convention

\* \* \* \*

National Catholic News Service - December 28, 1970

New York -- Fourteen leading American intellectuals, including Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, have issued a statement here charging the Soviet Union with launching a campaign "to intimidate the untold numbers of Soviet Jews who wish to maintain their Jewish identity."

The statement was released here as a result of the trial of eight Jews in Leningrad on charges of plotting to hijack a Soviet airliner. Two of those convicted of the charge by the Soviet court have been sentenced to death.

The statement noted that those arrested and tried in Leningrad had been among those Jews who had circulated appeals to Soviet officials seeking help in their efforts to leave Russia for Israel.

"These people," the statement declared, "have been chosen as object lessons to intimidate the untold numbers of Soviet Jews who wish to

maintain their Jewish identity and who want to exercise their elementary human right to leave the country to settle in Israel.

"Confronted by a wholly unanticipated upsurge of Jewish national consciousness, the regime has resorted, characteristically, to repressive measures, beginning with police interrogations, expulsion from the party, discharge from employment, suspension from university, and ending in this trial and others still to come."

The anti-Semitism evident in the Leningrad trial was supported in the statement by a list of alleged Jewish plots going back to 1911, and the time of the Tsars. The statement also claims that much of the evidence used at the trial was similar to that which was employed against Jews in Stalin's time.

Referring to the eight Jews convicted at the trial as the "Maccabees of today," the statement concluded: "We cry out against the cruel attempt to destroy their spirit. Is there an anguished conscience left in the world to witness and protest this outrage against the last great remnant of East European Jewry that survived the Nazi holocaust?"

In addition to the president of the University of Notre Dame, other signers of the statement were: Saul Bellow, novelist; Noam Chomsky, linguist; Henry Steele Commager, historian; Abraham J. Heschel, theologian; Alfred Kazin, critic; Arthur C. Kornberg, Nobel laureate; Dwight Macdonald, critic; Arthur Miller, Pulitzer Prizewinning playwright; Hans J. Morgenthau, political scientist; Bayard Rustin, civil rights activist; Robert Penn Warren, Pulitzer Prizewinning author; George Wald, Nobel laureate; and Eugene Wigner, Nobel laureate.

\* \* \* \*

TO THE EDITOR, NEW YORK TIMES

January 5, 1971

Millions have been gladdened by the news that at long last the Soviet Government has heard the voice of world conscience. Yielding to universal pressure, it ordered its supreme court to commute the death sentences of Mark Dymshits and Edward Kuznetsov. I, too, rejoice for -- as the rabbis taught -- a life saved is a world saved. Still, my happiness is marred; fifteen years of hard labor, at a very special camp, is still a mortal threat.

What disturbs me even more is that Russia's system of justice, which can sentence a man for an alleged plan not acted upon, remains

unchanged. Unchanged, too, is her emigration policy, which forbids Jews to leave the country for Israel.

In a totalitarian country, a man is the state's property. He must have no other thoughts or longings than the ones the authorities command. Hence all Jews whose hearts are in Israel are considered potential criminals.

All Soviet protestations notwithstanding, the Jews condemned at the Leningrad trial were condemned because they are Jews who wish to return to the land of their forefathers.

We must not forget that Erets Yisrael is a thorn in the flesh of the Soviet Union.

For this fledgling state is intent on building a society in which freedom, justice, and humanity flourish, in which Jews can live as Jews -- a society that is not beholden to the U.S.S.R. and that frowns on the Marxist myth of an order in which all distinction of class and peoplehood will disappear.

So will, according to the myth, anti-Semitism. Indeed, it might; if Soviet Russia continues her discrimination, Jews themselves will have disappeared.

The commutation of the two death sentences, gratifying as it is, must not cloud the realization that the existence of Jews in the Communist world is in jeopardy. All men concerned with the welfare of their neighbors and devoted to justice must demand, and demand again, that every Jew who wishes to leave Russia be permitted to do so.

To move to another country ready to accept the applicant is one of the inalienable rights of man, honored by all civilized countries. The right of mobility is no trifling matter. It is part of human dignity, and we must not allow the dignity of Jews to be trampled on by a pitiless government. Day after day, we must remind the Soviet Union to act as a member of the world community.

Msgr. John M. Oesterreicher  
The Institute of Judaeo-Christian  
Studies, Seton Hall University  
South Orange, New Jersey

\* \* \* \*

## SOVIET TRIAL OF JEWS FOR HIJACKING CALLED BARBARIC

National Catholic News Service - December 29, 1970

South Orange, N.J. -- The trial in Leningrad of 11 persons, nine of them Jews, for conspiring to hijack a Soviet plane was called barbaric by Catholic clergymen and laity active in establishing Judaeo-Christian relations.

"We protest not only against the two death sentences, but against the entire Leningrad trial," said Msgr. John M. Oesterreicher, director of the Institute for Judaeo-Christian Studies at Seton Hall University, and institute staff member Father Edward H. Flannery in a statement. Other staff members also endorsed the statement.

Noting that official Russian sources had admitted that the alleged hijackers never came near a plane, their statement said that "a plan not acted upon is not a crime; hence, the entire court proceedings are unfair, indeed barbaric.

"All Soviet protestations notwithstanding, the two Jews condemned to face the firing squad were condemned because they are Jews, because their hearts are in Israel. In a totalitarian country a man is the property of the state; he must have no other longings than the ones the state commands.

"Moreover, the state of Israel, intent on building a society in which freedom, justice and humanity flourish, in which Jews can live as Jews, a society that is not beholden to the USSR, and that frowns on the Marxist myth of a classless order in which anti-Semitism will automatically disappear, frightens the Russian communists. The Leningrad defendants are victims of this fear."

The statement asked for "an end to an uncivilized judicial system and to all forms of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union" and that "Jews be given the exercise of their inalienable right of moving to Israel if they so desire, and Israel is ready to accept them."

The statement also protested against "the repressive, indeed cruel treatment of Basque patriots by the Franco government." (Six Basques were sentenced to death and nine others to long prison terms after being convicted by a military court in Burgos, Spain, of the murder of a police official.)

## GROUP ASKS U.S. ACTION ON LENINGRAD SENTENCES

Religious News Service - December 29, 1970

Washington, D.C. -- Three leaders of the interreligious Appeal of Conscience Foundation met here with Secretary of State William P. Rogers to discuss U.S. action on the sentencing of all persons convicted of air-hijack plotting, nine of them Jews, to severe punishment by a Soviet court in Leningrad.

The delegation declined to elaborate on plans the Nixon Administration had for appealing on behalf of the 11, two of whom were sentenced to death before a firing squad.

Robert J. McCloskey, a State Department spokesman, said the U.S. had "taken action which we hope will be helpful." He did not give additional details.

Representing the foundation were Rabbi Arthur Schneier of Park East Synagogue, New York; Father Charles M. Whelan, S.J., assistant editor of America, the Jesuit weekly; and Francis E. Dorn, a former Congressman from Brooklyn.

The plight of Soviet Jews is one of the major concerns of the foundation.

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COMMUNITY RESPONSES IN THE UNITED STATES

## RELIGIOUS LEADERS STRESS CONCERN FOR SOVIET JEWS

The Providence Visitor - January 8, 1971

Bishop McVinney and leaders of the various religious denominations in Rhode Island, issued a statement last week expressing the concern of the Christian community of Rhode Island regarding the recent Leningrad trial of 11 Soviet Jews, accused of planning to hijack a plane last June....The statement follows: "We, the undersigned, wish to convey the concern of the Christian community of Rhode Island over the incident of the Leningrad trial, and to raise our voices in protest with freedom-loving peoples everywhere.

"We deplore the accusation of 'treason' applied to Soviet Jews who wish to emigrate to Israel, their spiritual homeland. The reaction of the Soviet state constitutes a denial of freedom of free entry and departure. How else can this unjust and flagrant violation of liberty be interpreted, except as an attack upon the dignity of the citizen, particularly the Jewish citizen, our brother? When the freedom of any people is imperiled, the freedom of all men is imperiled.

"The Jewish people have so often been the victims of tyranny. But now, the conscience of the Christian community must decry a further affront to their dignity."

The signatories of the statement were The Most Rev. Russell J. McVinney, D.D., Bishop of Providence; the Right Reverend John S. Higgins, D.D., Bishop of Rhode Island; The Reverend John B. Graybill, Ph.D., Stated Clerk Providence Presbytery; The Reverend R. Vernon Lawson, Conference Minister United Church of Christ; The Reverend W. Eugene Motter, Executive Minister Rhode Island Baptist State Convention; The Reverend Morrill O. Martin, District Superintendent of the R.I.-South Eastern Mass. District, United Methodist Church; The Reverend Daniel J. Carlson, Dean of Rhode Island District Lutheran Church, and The Reverend Wayne Artis, Ph.D., Executive Director, Council of Churches of Rhode Island.

\* \* \* \*

The Connecticut Jewish Ledger - December 30, 1970

The Rev. James Webb, executive secretary of the Connecticut Council of Churches, and the Rev. William Riley, representative to the Jewish community of the Ecumenical Commission, Archdiocese of Hartford,

joined in [a] statement pointing out that the accused in a crime that never took place only had "a common desire to seek freedom outside the Iron Curtain."

Emphasizing that no disrespect for the process of law was intended, the leaders cited the fact that the defendants were held incommunicado for six months--contrary to Soviet law--and could not even choose their own lawyers for a trial "by anti-Semitism from the first arrests to the final verdict." ...

"In this season," they continued, "when men's thoughts turn to brotherhood and peace on earth, we cry out for justice and humaneness; for adherence to an internationally accepted standard of fairness; for commutation of the harsh sentences exacted by a government which apparently can brook no deviations from its imposed doctrines.

"We call upon our government officials and all people of good will to forcefully register their protests to the trial and its verdicts and to make all efforts to alleviate the plight of those already sentenced, as well as those who still languish in Soviet jails awaiting the ordeal of future trials."

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#### HUNDREDS KEEP VIGIL FOR SOVIET JEWS AT WOODBRIDGE SYNAGOGUE

The Connecticut Jewish Ledger - January 7, 1971

...some 700 area residents attended a prayer vigil in behalf of Soviet Jewry Wednesday night at Congregation Bnai Jacob, Woodbridge [New Haven].

The vigil was part of a worldwide outcry against the death sentences handed down to two Jews for conspiracy to hijack a plane in Leningrad.

Both Jewish and non-Jewish religious leaders spoke at the vigil, which began with a half-hour prayer service...

The Rev. Harold Clement, black pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and past president of the Connecticut Council of Churches, equated the oppression of Jews in Russia with that of blacks in the United States.

It is impossible for either Jews in Russia or blacks in the United States to get a fair trial, the minister noted, adding that the black community gives all its "strength and support" to the Jewish people.

Minorities must use every necessary means available to protest and even disrupt the machine of oppression," he declared, "calling for the release of all Jewish political prisoners."

The Rev. Mr. Whitlock, president of the Greater New Haven Council of Churches, asserted, "This act of legalistic oppression on the part of the Soviet courts is in direct contravention to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, subscribed to by the Soviet at the Teheran Conference, which asserts that every individual has the right to live in the country of his choice...."

Mr. Whitlock maintained Jews and Christians alike "must stand and be counted." "Neither can be neutral," he said, "for the bell that tolls for the Leningrad nine tolls also for us. If the Jewish minority in the Soviet Union must live in bondage how can we here, Jew and Christian alike, be free?"

Albert Moschette, chairman of the Connecticut Policy and Action Committee of the Italian-American Civil Rights League, read a brief statement in support of the vigil....

The Rev. David McDonald, representing the Archdiocese of Hartford, cited a statement by Pope Paul VI in support of Jews worldwide and said it was his "privilege to offer the support of the Catholic Church in this vigil."

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#### RESOLUTION ON TREATMENT OF JEWS IN THE SOVIET UNION

"As Christians, as men of conscience and as representatives of our respective denominations in the State of Connecticut, we reiterate our past pronouncements for freedom, dignity and self-determination for all people and against oppression and tyranny wherever it may be found.

"We do now raise our voices to join those millions of men of good will who protest the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union.

"We call upon our President, Richard M. Nixon, the State Department, our Ambassador to the U.N. and all other appropriate agencies of our Government to call for the immediate end to the acts of repression and discrimination against Soviet Jews, and to grant them the right to live as Jews in Russia and the right to leave and live in other countries of their choice.

"So long as these injustices persist, we as men of conscience cannot and will not be silent. In anguish we raise our voices and call for

immediate action to end this repression."

Board of Directors  
Connecticut Council of Churches  
Meeting January 15, 1971  
Hartford, Connecticut

\* \* \* \*

## 2000 DECRY SOVIET POLICY ON JEWS

Long Island Press -- February 22, 1971 (By Glenn Singer)

More than 2,000 Long Islanders from over 60 synagogues and religious organizations gathered at Mitchel Field in East Meadow yesterday to protest alleged Soviet persecution of Russian Jews.

Rallying in Hangar 6 at the former Air Force Base, the protesters heard political and religious leaders decry Russian policies toward Jews, and they watched as 11 young people, dressed in Soviet prison garb, ate a 300-calorie meal of beet soup and black bread, designed "to create a spirit of sharing the suffering of Soviet Jewry."...

The Rev. Jonathan G. Sherman, bishop of Long Island, said he had sent a pastoral letter to be read in every congregation in the Diocese of Long Island yesterday morning, stating:

"The suppression of organized religion in Soviet Russia is an incontestable fact. The plight of three million Russian Jews, who can neither assert their religious or cultural identity nor leave the Soviet Union, has captured worldwide attention and concern. As Christians, who share this suffering with our Jewish brethren and who share also our common faith in the just and merciful God, we cannot pass by on the other side."

He continued: "It is not only Jewish believers who are suffering today in Soviet Russia. Christian believers also are subjected to interrogations, to beatings, to fines, to the confiscation of religious literature, to the breaking up of religious services and houses of prayer and to imprisonment.

"As we look back to the nightmare of the Nazi gas chambers in World War II, the horror lies not only in the suffering of the innocent, but in the failure of civilized and religious people to speak out. At this point my concern is for the honor of this nation, which boasts of its tradition of civility, of independence, of human rights."...

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum...of the American Jewish Committee, received vociferous response from the audience when he proclaimed that "we will never be silent again. We will march and march until Jews of the Soviet Union are given their freedom. We are not anti-Soviet --we are pro-human rights--let them leave."

Tanenbaum added, referring to the Soviet government: "We don't ask you to love the Jews, but simply to honor the universal declaration of human rights. Stop becoming the greatest purveyor of anti-Semitism under the guise of anti-Zionism in the world today."

Yesterday's rally was the third action by the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry. It previously sponsored a 2,500-car motorcade from Roosevelt Field in Garden City to the Russian compound in Glen Cove and the continuing daily "Minyan at the Gate" there, which is in its fifth week.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
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ARCHIVES

TELEGRAM

December 30, 1970

His Excellency, Premier Aleksei Kosygin  
The Kremlin  
Moscow, USSR

Excellency:

The Long Island Interfaith Council, representing religious and lay leaders of the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faith communities on Long Island, joins with men and women of conscience throughout the world in condemning the Soviet government's repressive policies against Soviet citizens of the Jewish faith who have attempted to assert their religious and cultural identities as Jews.

We are shocked at the severe penalties that have been handed down in the Leningrad "hijacking" trial and urge your government to act promptly and commute the death sentences. We note that there would have been no hijacking "plot" had Soviet authorities heeded the pleas of hundreds of Jews who have petitioned for the elementary human right to leave the USSR in order to join families and brethren in Israel.

We deplore the attempt of any government to intimidate people whose real "crime" is that they were born and seek to live as Jews. We

urge you to reconsider and reverse a policy that pursues the anti-Semitic excesses that have stained the pages of recent history.

Sincerely

Frank H. Brennan, Co-Chairman  
 Rev. Clayton L. Williams, Co-Chmn.  
 Rabbi Bernard Kligfeld, Co-Chmn.

Roman Catholic members of the Interfaith Council include Rev. Patrick E. Shanahan, Superintendent of Schools for the Rockville Center Diocese, Rev. R. Emmett Fagan, Executive Director for Catholic Charities and Rev. Paul E. McKeever, editor of The Long Island Catholic, the diocesan weekly newspaper. Protestant participants include Rev. David Parker, Rev. Robert Wieman and Rev. John Dykstra representing the Long Island Council of Churches. The Council's Jewish members include Harold Applebaum and George Berlstein of the American Jewish Committee, Dr. Stanley Greenberg and S. Stanley Kreutzer of the American Jewish Congress and Kurt Kelman and Joel Komarow of the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith.

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CATHOLIC-JEWISH COUNCIL ASKS SOVIETS TO CANCEL  
 SENTENCES FOR HIJACKERS

The Scarsdale Inquirer - December 31, 1970

The Scarsdale Catholic-Jewish Council has sent a wire to the Soviet Embassy "expressing horror" over the punishment ordered by the Soviet Union of the eleven persons who sought to emigrate from that country. The wire, drafted by Father Henry d'Anjou of IHM, asked that the Soviets cancel the sentences that have been meted out.

The Scarsdale Council was organized in February of this year to promote mutual understanding and creative dialogue between Catholics and Jews on the parish level....

The Reporter Dispatch - January 4, 1971

White Plains, N.Y. -- The massing of community opinion against the sentencing of Soviet Jews for an alleged hijacking last month was noted Saturday in a community service of prayer and protest conducted at Temple Israel Center, White Plains....Some Christian participants in the service were the Rev. Charles H. Churn, Jr., president of the White Plains-Greenburgh chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles J. McManus, pastor of St. Bernard's Church, White Plains; the Rev. Frank Watson, president of the White Plains Association of Religious Leaders....

TELEGRAM (copy sent to Secretary of State, William Rogers)

January 4, 1971

The Hon. Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador  
Washington, D.C.

Honorable Ambassador:

We are shocked and pained by the results of the trials in Leningrad. Thirty years ago our countries fought together to defeat the racial, religious, and cultural repression of Nazism and Fascism. The high proportion of Jews among the accused and the incredible severity of the sentences lead fair men everywhere to suspect that the virulent forces we combatted together have re-emerged. We plead that your country will show that this is not so by extending clemency and by allowing your free citizens to live where they choose.

Most sincerely,

The Rev. William H. Harter and  
The Rev. Linda B. Harter  
Margaretville-New Kingston  
United Presbyterian Parish  
Catskill Mountains-New York State

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STATEMENT OF CARDINAL SHEHAN

Baltimore Catholic Review - January 5, 1971

Throughout the civilized world men and women of all faiths are appalled at the severity of the sentences meted out to the eleven Leningrad Jewish defendants charged with conspiracy to hijack a Soviet airliner. I join my voice with the chorus of protest at the harsh and inhuman handling of these unfortunate victims of Soviet intimidation.

The crime which has brought the full weight of Russian harshness on the heads of the Jewish defendants is their outspoken desire to retain their Jewish identity and in many instances to leave the U.S.S.R. to begin life anew in Israel. The conspiracy trial seems to be a facade erected to provide a grim warning to more than three million Soviet Jews to go along quietly with the government program of ethnic, cultural and religious repression which has so long been the lot of this tormented minority.

I call for clemency on the part of Soviet leadership and an end to this systematic and dehumanizing harassment.

Lawrence Cardinal Shehan  
Archbishop of Baltimore

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Washington, D.C.

During the greater part of December 1970, a silent vigil was maintained across from the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C. This vigil manifested concern for the plight of the Soviet Jews and there was Christian participation in the vigil.

The Rev. John F. Steinbruck, Pastor of the Luther Place Memorial Church, was one of the Christian leaders who came to the vigil every day. In fact, on Christmas Day, after completing his major service, Rev. Steinbruck marched in the vigil. Other Christian leaders who participated were Msgr. Geno Baroni of the United States Catholic Conference and the Rev. Philip R. Newell, Associate Executive Director of the Council of Churches of Greater Washington.

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#### OTHER FAITHS JOIN JEWS IN RED PROTEST

Cleveland Plain Dealer - January 2, 1971 (By Albion Gorisek)

Cleveland, Ohio --The non-Jewish community responded in a most humanitarian way to the petition drive protesting Soviet death penalties against alleged hijackers.

Clergymen and laymen of all faiths helped man some of the 10 booths set up to collect signatures. Almost 20,000 were obtained during the 12-hour drive.

At the Euclid Arcade, the Rev. Thomas L. McCray of Greater Avery A.M.E. Church on Wade Park Avenue assisted booth workers. At another booth in Severance Center, the Rev. Robert W. Hare, Presbyterian pastor of the Congregation of the Reconciliation, the "floating" church, passed out petitions.

And one of the most unusual requests for petitions came from the cloistered Carmelite Monastery in Cleveland Heights. However, the nuns' response there should not have surprised anyone who knows anything about nuns these days, even those shut off from the world as the old cloisters were....

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TELEGRAM

December 29, 1970

Anatoly F. Dobrynin  
Soviet Ambassador  
Washington, D.C.

We respectfully request that you use your good offices with your government to insure that the current hijack trials in Leningrad be publicly held and free of religious prejudice. We ask you to use your influence to assure every Soviet citizen the basic human rights of freedom of religion and freedom to emigrate.

Rev. John Wessel  
Director of Interreligious Affairs  
Catholic Diocese of Cleveland

AMERICAN JEWISH  
\* \* \* \* \*  
ARCHIVES

Public statements in support of the Soviet Jews were also issued by the Rev. Richard Drake, President, Cleveland Council of Churches, and the Rev. Donald Jacobs, Executive Director of the Cleveland Council of Churches.

STATEMENT ISSUED DECEMBER 29, 1970

The original decision of the Soviet Union, sentencing the two Russian Jewish pilots to death for the recent attempt to emigrate from Russia, shocked the conscience of Christian people. The severity of the punishment was clearly out of proportion to the crime committed. Furthermore, the fact that the attempt of the Russian Jews and non-Jews to use the plane to gain their freedom must be taken into account. My spirit feels a strong affinity with the Jewish people who desire to unite with their fellow Israelites in their homeland of Israel. May God speed the day when such injustice and oppression of people, which denies them their birthright of God-given freedom, will be removed from the world. For the sake of human brotherhood, I add my voice to those of other thousands in speaking out against the present oppression of the Jewish people of Russia.

Rev. John E. Witte, President  
Greater Cleveland National Association  
of Evangelicals

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TELEGRAM

December 29, 1970

Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin  
 USSR Embassy  
 Washington, D.C.

Representing various religious bodies in this city, Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Jewish, we join the many thousands of voices in this country and throughout the world in appealing to the government of the Soviet Union for clemency in behalf of the Jews currently on trial. We urgently request that you release them in the name of human justice and mercy.

Albert B. Gill, Executive Secretary  
 The Ecumenical Association  
 Canton, Ohio

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TELEGRAM

December 29, 1970

The Honorable Anatoly F. Dobrynin  
 Soviet Ambassador  
 Embassy of the USSR  
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

It is shocking to learn from our Jewish friends that anti-Semitism is still rampant in the Soviet and that political trials are presently under way again. The era of Stalin appears to be with us yet; unfavorable comparisons with Hitler and the whole Nazi ideology force themselves upon us. The communistic system certainly must wish to justify itself before the world as the system most beneficial to mankind generally and individually. That, of course, is not my belief; what I hear confirms me in that conviction. What answers in fact or in philosophy does USSR have to account for the present treatment of Jews and the current trials? Please do everything in your power to see to it that justice is done in Russia and that your image before the world is such as you truly desire. Yours in Christ.

Rev. Thomas A. Redding, Director of  
 Community Relations of the  
 Toledo Catholic Diocese

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TELEGRAM

December 29, 1970

The Honorable William P. Rogers  
 Secretary of State  
 Department of State  
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Our friends in the Jewish community assure us that political trials against Jews who have shown interest in migrating to Israel are under way in Russia. Police repression, secret hearings, rigged evidence--the whole sick gamut--appear to be again in force. Please do everything in your power, find the arguments which might appeal to the Soviet mentality, to stop this continuation of what has to be the longest standing sin of that part of the world which owes its origin to Christianity. Anti-Semitism, unfortunately, is a Christian heritage, even in Russia. Western men of good will have an historic responsibility to crush this evil wherever we see it. Yours in Christ.

Rev. Thomas A. Redding, Director  
 of Community Relations of the  
 Toledo Catholic Diocese

TELEGRAM

December 30, 1970

His Excellency, Anatoly F. Dobrynin  
 Soviet Ambassador to the United States  
 Washington, D.C.

Your Excellency:

The sentences meted out to Jews, recently tried for alleged hijacking attempts, are further examples of the determination of the Russian Government to silence those Jews who wish to leave the oppressive confines of the Soviet Union and emigrate to Israel, to freedom.

We call upon the Russian Government to grant clemency to Mark Dymshits and Eduard Kuznetsov, and to free all Russian Jews who desire to live in freedom outside the borders of the Soviet Union. Please know that the world will not remain silent while crimes against humanity are committed.

The Executive Committee,  
The Metropolitan Area Religious  
Coalition of Cincinnati

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TELEGRAM

December 22, 1970

Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin  
USSR Embassy  
1706 18th Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20009

As Americans of various faiths, deeply concerned about human dignity and the inherent rights of mankind, we urge the prompt release and exoneration of Soviet Jews now being held incommunicado. We are convinced that the trials are political in nature, designed to stifle the quest for religious freedom and the right of emigration, contrary to the guarantees of your own constitution. The conscience of humanity is aroused and the USSR must understand that its anti-Jewish policies are morally intolerable to free men everywhere. We strongly urge your active intervention to end all acts of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

Bishop James W. Malone  
Catholic Diocese of Youngstown

Rabbi Mendel L. Abrams, President  
Board of Rabbis of Greater Youngstown

Rev. Norman M. Parr, Executive Director  
Youngstown Area Council of Churches

Very Rev. Isaiah Chronopoulos, President  
Eastern Orthodox Clergy Association

Phillip A. Millstone, Chairman  
Jewish Community Relations Council of  
Youngstown

In addition to these telegrams and statements, Jewish and Christian religious leaders participated in a series of public rallies in Cincinnati's Fountain Square and in Akron, Canton, Dayton, Toledo and Youngstown.

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#### PRAYERS ASKED FOR SOVIET PRISONERS

The New World - January 1, 1971

Chicago, Ill. -- Catholics of the Archdiocese of Chicago have been asked to pray for the success of Vatican efforts to secure clemency for the Soviet citizens in Leningrad condemned recently by Soviet courts.

In a letter to pastors, Msgr. Francis W. Byrne, Vicar General wrote:

"The recent trial and sentencing of Soviet citizens by the tribunal in Leningrad have caused grave concern for men of good will throughout the world. Today (December 29) the Vatican announced it is doing everything in its power to urge the Soviet government to grant clemency to the condemned.

"In the spirit of brotherhood highlighted by the Second Vatican Council, Catholics of the Archdiocese are urged to pray for success of the Vatican intervention and clemency for the Leningrad prisoners. Pastors are asked to include these intentions in the prayers of the faithful at Holy Mass."

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"In the same vein and in the spirit of religious freedom, we urge the U.S.S.R. to release the 33 Soviet Jews who have been arrested, imprisoned, indicted and are now being tried for what appears to be no other crime than their professed desire to emigrate from Russia and to seek their destiny as Jews in Israel and elsewhere.

"We urge all people of goodwill to join in prayer for the welfare of all now in shackles and urge a united mankind to join in every effort to put an end to enslavement in whatever form and wherever it is found."

Signers of the statement were Archbishop Coadjutor Leo C. Byrne of the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis; Dr. Melvin A. Hammarberg, president of the Minnesota Council of Churches; Rabbi Arnold M. Goodman, president of the Minnesota Rabbinical Association; Dr. Arnold T. Olson, past-president of the National Association of Evangelicals, and the Rev. Anthony M. Coniaris, pastor of St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church.

MINNESOTA CHURCHMEN ASK PRAYERS, ACTIONS FOR POWs, JEWS  
SEEKING TO LEAVE USSR

Religious News Service - December 29, 1970

Minneapolis -- Five Minnesota religious leaders have urged prayers and action in behalf of prisoners of war in Vietnam and 33 jailed Jews seeking to leave the Soviet Union.

Their statement was issued through the regional office of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

"At this season of the year, when our homes are aglow with festival lights, decorated with holiday symbols signifying 'Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men' and religious freedom for all, our sympathies well up for the hundreds of our American men now being held as prisoners of war in North Vietnam," the statement declared.

"We urge that the North Vietnamese government allow the prisoners of war to maintain contact with their families and not limit the holiday gifts which they may receive from their dear ones. We pray for the early release of all prisoners of war being held by both North and South Vietnam.

TELEGRAM

December 31, 1970

To the Ambassador of the USSR, Washington, D.C.

Your Excellency:

Personally and on behalf of the 43 member Ecclesiastical units of the Texas Conference of Churches, permit me to express appreciation for the commutation by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of the death sentences of the two Jews initially condemned to death.

At the same time, I must express profound concern regarding the Leningrad trials of eleven people, nine of whom are Jews. This concern, I feel, represents the feeling of Christians and of free people in the world. The trials stand as the latest example of the historical oppression of the Jewish people in their attempt to secure religious and cultural identity.

It is our firm conviction that people wishing to emigrate to Israel or elsewhere should be permitted to do so. This must be the position of free people everywhere.

The Most Reverend John L. Morkovsky  
President, Texas Conference of Churches

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### TEXAS

On December 29, 1970, the Houston Jewish Community Council sponsored a mass rally for Soviet Jewry that was attended by over 1600 people. Statements were read by leading Christian ministers including Southern Baptists, a representative of the Episcopal Bishop, the Director of the Commission for Interreligious Affairs of the Catholic Diocese of Galveston, Houston and by Bishop John L. Morkovsky, the President of the Texas Conference of Churches.

Over 1,000 people attended an Interreligious Community Prayer Vigil in Dallas on December 30th. The meeting took place in the sanctuary of Temple Emanu-El. Nearly half of the participants were Christians including clergy leaders of the black, brown and red communities. The Roman Catholic Bishop, Thomas Tschoepe; the Executive Director of the Greater Dallas Council of Churches, Rev. Louis Saunders; the Minister of the black CME Church and the pastor of the First Mexican Baptist Church all spoke at the vigil. The latter pastor prayed in Spanish.

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LET MY PEOPLE GO  
AN URGENT CRY FOR HELP

Dallas Morning News - December 30, 1970

Dallas, Texas -- Less than 25 years after the fields of Europe had been desecrated with the ashes of six million Jews, the Soviet Union is once again unloosing the same deadly virus which led to the Holocaust. Once again the world is witnessing an instant replay of Nazi-like repression directed at those whose only crime is that they wish to remain Jews. Once again false arrests and mock trials, searches and seizures, interrogation and imprisonments are being inflicted upon a Jewish minority as an expression of official governmental policy.

There has been a long history in the Soviet Union of anti-Semitic persecution. Jews have faced discrimination in education and employment. They are not permitted to know the history of their people or to learn any aspect of Jewish literature from the Bible to the present. Jews

are not permitted to maintain any kind of religious, educational, cultural, or communal institutions, such being denied to them and to no other ethnic or religious minority in the USSR. This religious and cultural genocide has now intensified, and recent events cause alarm and grave fear for the physical safety of Soviet Jews.

If the world community had expressed sooner its revulsion at Nazi persecution, perhaps the tragic events that followed could have been avoided.

If we, now, turn the spotlight of truth and world conscience on the inhumanity toward Jews in the Soviet Union, perhaps another such painful page in history will not be written.

We call upon Dallas citizens, Jews and Christians alike -- all who believe in religious liberty -- to communicate their concern to the Soviet Embassy in Washington and to our government officials. We must insure that the rights of Soviet Jews as equal citizens of the Soviet Union and their freedom to worship without fear be restored. We also urge, if the USSR is unwilling or unable to grant such freedoms, that, in the name of humanity, its Jewish minority be permitted to emigrate to Israel or any other welcoming country. In the words of the Bible, "Let my people go that they may serve me."--Exodus 7-8-9

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ON DECEMBER 31, 1970 THE LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL APPROVED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS, a sister city of Los Angeles, Eilat in Israel, has asked our city government to speak out on the plight of those recently convicted in Leningrad, Soviet Russia; and

WHEREAS, the two Jews who were sentenced to death have had their sentences commuted in response to world public opinion; and

WHEREAS, these two defendants, as well as nine others, are still subject to heavy prison sentences; and

WHEREAS, there are reports of other trials planned of Jews in Leningrad again, in Riga, and in Kishinev; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Los Angeles have a special relationship to our brothers and sisters in Eilat and a universal concern for humanity, justice, liberty and freedom of movement; and

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which guarantees, among other things, the right to freely emigrate;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Los Angeles request that the United States State Department and the President continue to do all within their power to importune the Soviet Union into granting clemency in all cases and to permit all those arrested, and all others who wish to do so, to freely emigrate, including to Israel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk send copies of this resolution to the United States State Department and the President of the United States.

Presented by: THOMAS BRADLEY  
Councilman, Tenth District  
Chairman of State, County and  
Federal Affairs Committee

Prior to the Council's action, key Southern California religious leaders appeared before the City Council seeking support for the resolution. These leaders included:

The Very Rev. Father Charles S. Cassassa, S.J., Chancellor of  
Loyola University  
Dr. David Lieber, President, University of Judaism  
Dr. Horace Mays, Executive Director, Los Angeles Council of Churches  
Dr. Luther Olmon, Chairman, Public Affairs Commission, Council of  
Churches of Southern California  
Rabbi Jacob Ott, Chairman, American Zionist Council, Los Angeles  
Dr. Randall Phillips, President, Los Angeles Council of Churches  
Dr. Carl Segerhammar, President, Pacific Southwest Synod, Lutheran  
Church in America  
Dr. Forrest Weir, General Secretary, Council of Churches of Southern  
California

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A 'RALLY OF CONSCIENCE' HERE FOR SOVIET JEWS

San Francisco Chronicle - December 31, 1970

"Tyranny against Jews is tyranny against all men," Mayor Joseph Alioto told a cheering crowd of about 1000 in San Francisco last night at Temple Emanu-El.

Addressing a "Rally of Conscience" to protest the recent sentencing of nine Soviet Jews convicted of attempted skyjacking, the Mayor concluded "all men must be passionate in raising their voices against anti-Semitism, whether it be here or in Russia."

The mayor was joined by the Most Rev. Archbishop Joseph T. McGucken /and Dr. Russell S. Orr, President, Northern California Council of Churches/ and Congressman-elect Ronald Dellums of Berkeley at a demonstration marked by expressions of concern from Bay Area civic leaders as well as members of the community.

The rally ended several hours before word was received here that the sentences had been commuted by the Soviet Supreme Court.

Dellums said "If there's repression anywhere, we're in trouble everywhere." He cited the examples of "the Basque freedom fighters, the fighters of oppression here in the U.S. and the Russian Jews.

The archbishop added his prayer that "Each man may live under his own vine and his own fig tree," and gave the rally his blessing.

Speaking for the California Labor Federation was its executive secretary-treasurer John F. Henning, who noted that..."I am truly sorry that the vision of another holocaust spoils this joyous holiday season."

Those attending the rally were encouraged to send telegrams to government officials and members of Congress as well as to Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the United States, demanding the release of Jews kept involuntarily in Russia and decrying the Leningrad trials.

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#### ARCHBISHOP PLEADS FOR SOVIET JEWS

Catholic Northwest Progress - January 1, 1971

Seattle, Wash. -- Archbishop Thomas A. Connolly this week sent a telegram to both President Richard Nixon and United Nations Secretary-General U Thant urging them to intercede on behalf of the two Jews sentenced to death by a Soviet court for their participation in an alleged plot to hijack an airplane and flee to Finland.

In petitioning the two world leaders to act for a mitigation of the death sentence, Archbishop Connolly was following the example of Pope Paul VI. The Pontiff made a similar plea earlier.

A total of 31 persons were tried by the Communists for the hijack attempt, but only two were given death sentences. The others received severe prison terms.

The harshness of the sentences has drawn criticism from all corners of the world: even the Communist press in France and Italy has been critical of the verdict.

It is reported that the persons involved were not anti-Soviet per se, but that they were chaffing under the restrictions the Communists were imposing on the Soviet Jews. They were anxious to vacate the country and settle in Israel. Since the men were attempting to leave Russia without proper authorization, the Soviet courts ruled their actions as treasonable.

Archbishop Connolly's telegram indicated his shock at the severity of the sentences and pressed President Nixon and U Thant to convey to the government of the Soviet Union an earnest request that the verdict be reconsidered.

The Israeli government, speaking through Prime Minister Golda Meier, has charged the Soviet Government with a ruthless, systematic persecution of Soviet Jewry that threatens to equal that inflicted by the Hitler regime within a short time.

/In addition to the Archbishop's telegram, similar messages were sent by the Church Council of Greater Seattle, the Washington State Council of Churches, and the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia/.

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#### JEWISH LEADERS 'HAPPY' AT RULING

Seattle Post Intelligencer - January 2, 1971

Seattle, Wash.-- ...Catholic and Protestant church organizations in the Seattle area hailed the decision to commute the sentences.

And Jewish, Catholic and Protestant organizations are calling upon people of all faiths to observe a Sabbath of Concern for Soviet Jewry on the weekend of January 8-10.

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#### 600 CONGREGATIONS PRAY FOR SOVIET JEWS

The Jewish Transcript - January 14, 1971

Seattle, Wash. -- Congregations in over 600 Catholic, Protestant and Jewish places of prayer in an area from Tacoma to Edmonds in Washington said prayers for the Soviet Jewry on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday,

January 8-10 in one of the greatest combined efforts for a group in another country in years.

The churches acted on an emergency request of William Cate of the Church Council of Greater Seattle who had letters sent out by General Secretary Everett J. Jensen, of the Washington State Council of Churches.

Excerpts from the letter read as follows: "The social and political condition of Jews in the Soviet Union is worsening. Jews have difficulty in performing their religious practices; they are denied exit permits to emigrate to Israel and many are tried on seemingly trumped-up charges.

"We of the Protestant community join with our Jewish brothers and in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle, in calling for a Sabbath of Concern for Soviet Jewry.

"As churchmen we should be concerned about liberty, justice and brotherhood for all men everywhere. Our culture has dealt poorly with the Jews in particular. They do need a sense of undergirding and brotherhood. You and your people can share with them not only this weekend, but until their condition is bettered."

Accompanying the letter was the following prayer which was used in churches throughout the area:

"...We remember, therefore, this day, our Jewish brethren who suffer and who are oppressed in the Soviet Union. In the midst of the threat of death and of prison, they still long for a land of promise and hope. We beseech you, Father, not only to uphold and protect them in this time of trial, but to open ways for them to share with their own people their religion and heritage in a land of their own choosing.

"We pray for the Soviet people so that they, too, might catch a vision of a world of brotherhood and of human dignity. Keep them from the hurt of persecution so that they, in turn, might not come to fear the threat of oppression in themselves.

"We pray for ourselves so that we harbor not hatred and animosity towards any man nor any race. May we, too, find fulfillment in Thy promise of brotherhood for all and thus be saved from selfishness and indifference and might learn to live for one another.

"Thanks, Father, for hearing our prayers; stir us up now to do Thy will.

Amen! "

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CHRISTIAN PRESS REACTIONS

## THE JEWISH DEFENDANTS AT LENINGRAD

The following article by Father John B. Sheerin, C.S.P. Editor of the Catholic World appeared in 23 Roman Catholic papers in the United States during the last week of November 1970.

Sum and Substance - November 23, 1970

According to reports coming out of Russia, the Soviets are preparing to try 31 persons at Leningrad for an attempted hijacking at a Leningrad airport last June. Most of the defendants are Jews, many of whom had recently applied for permission to emigrate to Israel. The director of the London Institute of Jewish Affairs has said that the case may have been trumped up by Soviet police to punish Jews who want to emigrate. (This case is not to be confused with the hijackings of two Soviet planes to Turkey in October.) Many American Jews fear that the trial is the opening gun of a major drive against Jews in Russia.

The right to emigrate is a natural and legal right. I suppose the Soviets want to ban emigration to Israel at this time because it would be unwelcome to their Arab comrades-in-arms. Why then would the Soviets go to the trouble of faking a trial? Why don't they simply forbid emigration even though it is a human right?

One reason is that they have been attacking the democracies for violating human rights. They have been very vocal on this point in the United Nations. Some months ago, the newspaper Izvestia editorialized about the unflagging efforts of the Soviet Union on behalf of human rights and claimed credit for the Soviets for the fact that the U.N. had adopted a series of measures aimed at the implementation of human rights. The Review, published by the International Commission of Jurists, commented wryly in its March, 1970 issue that the Soviets should be given credit for their work in supporting human rights "in countries other than their own."

Secondly, it appears that the Soviets are engaged in a campaign to Russify all of Russia, absorbing all national and ethnic groups into national life and the Soviet monolith. There have been about 20 trials of Tartars who wanted to return to their homeland in Crimea.

At the present time, the approximately 2½ million Jews in Russia have no ethnic or religious existence as a minority. They are dispersed over the vast expanse of Soviet Russia. They have no Yiddish papers, no meeting places, no means of communicating their Jewishness to their children save in their homes.

The Vatican II Declaration on Religious Freedom insisted on "the right of men freely to hold meetings and to establish educational cultural, charitable and social organizations, under the impulse of their own religious sense" (Ch.I,4). There seems to be no overt physical persecution of the Jews in Russia, rather a systematic repression of any and all social expression of their religious and ethnic identity. Thousands have applied to leave the country.

One Jewish visitor to Russia recently told me that 400,000 have requested permission to leave. They realize the danger of official reprisals from the Government but they feel that their present status is so sub-human that they have nothing to lose by their protests.

This would be an appropriate time for Pope Paul to reiterate the human rights asserted in the Declaration on Religious Freedom. The American Government might also call attention to the implausible trial at Leningrad and ask for information. Possibly the Soviets will bar the press from the trial. If so, the U.S. would do well to ask that impartial observers be invited to the proceedings.

The U.N. Human Rights Commission decided to set up a special working group to investigate violations of human rights in the Middle East and Southern Africa--and the Soviet Union voted very ostentatiously for this inquiry. Since the Soviet Union is so solitious about human rights in other countries, it ought to welcome an investigation into this highly dubious trial at Leningrad. Dubious? Perhaps this is not the word to describe the trial of 31 "accomplices" in the hijacking of a plane that never actually got off the ground.

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#### THE LENINGRAD 11

Commonweal - January 7, 1971

The humanitarian instincts of the USSR have never been marked by consistency, but there is a particular inconsistency in the Soviet's unrelenting concern for Angela Davis and its lack of visible concern for the 11 defendants in the Leningrad hijack case. Passion in the one direction would seem to dictate some visible concern in the other. At this writing, it's not to be found.

The two cases admittedly have no legal relationship. However, there is the link that in both cases justice and individual rights are put to an additional testing by biases which exist in crucial official areas - against black militants in the Davis instance; against Jews in the instance of the Leningrad 11.

This is not to suggest that one or the other is necessarily victimized

in being brought to trial; it is rather to say with respect to the Soviet that if the Davis case deserves the enormous attention it is accorded on Radio Moscow (where Angela Davis is likened to Joe Hill, to Sacco and Vanzetti), and if it merits the marshaling of public opinion (e.g., the appeal to Mr. Nixon from 14 top Russian scientists), no less worthy is the case of the Leningrad 11.

That the Leningrad 11 were tried in virtual secrecy, that news of the proceedings was rigorously suppressed, that the sentences were Stalin-like in their severity, beclouds the nature of Soviet motives and further discredits Soviet understanding of justice and right, particularly as these apply to Soviet Jews. One is driven to the conclusion of protesting Americans, that the Soviet made the Leningrad 11 an object lesson to intimidate the untold numbers of Jews in Russia who wish to maintain their Jewish identity.

What is beyond dispute is that the Soviet stands dishonored until it rectifies the injustice done at Leningrad and removes the intolerable restrictions on travel and emigration, which drive people to desperate acts like the alleged Leningrad hijack plot.

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#### LEGAL BRUTALITY AND THE ANGUISH OF SEPARATION

The Christian Century - January 6, 1971

Every year the spirit of joy and peace which belongs to both Hanukkah and Christmas is strained by the knowledge of particular cases of human misery. The plights of two groups half a world apart have become especially vivid in the past several weeks. What these groups have in common is the anguish of forced separation from their people - a separation due in each case to the harsh policies of a great power.

The more immediately urgent of these two cases - literally a life-and-death matter - is the distress of Jews in the Soviet Union who seek to emigrate to Israel. It is one of the bitterest ironies of this era that the government which was the first officially to establish an ideology of international socialist fraternity maintains a totalitarian system of absolute national statehood. The Leningrad trial which condemned two would-be Jewish émigrés to death (a sentence cynically announced on Christmas Eve) can hardly be understood by Jews anywhere as other than a brutal warning of the consequences of solidarity with Israel. Mark Dymshits and Eduard Kuznetsov, along with nine others (seven of whom are Jews), were convicted of planning to hijack a Soviet airliner. But the trial was closed to the international press, notwithstanding the Soviet Union's tardy support for international sanctions in hijacking cases. Moreover, this case did not

involve any actual hijacking, yet it resulted in the death penalty when prison terms were provided for under the applicable law. Humanitarians everywhere can only conclude that the sentence is an injustice in the extreme and that there is strong reason to be suspicious of the trial itself as an exercise in political and religious repression. We must hope that worldwide protest and the appeals process in the Soviet courts will at least result in commutation of sentence and some modification of emigration policy. So far this case has offered nothing but bad news for Sovietologists who in recent years have detected a more humane jurisprudence and a more moderate foreign policy in the U.S.S.R.

The other case is the predicament of thousands of young Americans who are draft exiles in Canada. In addition to material necessities, these opponents of the Vietnam war and the draft require a special ministry to their spiritual and emotional needs, which are aggravated by their refugee status. On request of the Canadian Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches last month asked its member churches voluntarily to contribute \$70,000 for each of the next three years for an ecumenical aid program. The WCC rightly insists that the issue is ministry to people in need, not support for draft evasion. Moreover, Americans are reminded that their country served for generations as a sanctuary for refugees from European military conscription.

We do not desire or expect nation-states to cease to exist or to become only minor entities in the international system. But we long for the day when the transcendent fact of human identity will be honored by national governments above the particularities of legal identity. Vigorous support for the rights of Jews in the Soviet Union and for the ministry to U.S. refugees in Canada is a good place to begin.

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Christianity Today - January 29, 1971 (By Harold Lindsell, Editor)

The plight of the Jews in the Soviet Union continues to worsen. The reduction in the death sentences of some Jews convicted of a hijacking offense that never became airborne indicates no change of mind or heart by Soviet officials. It is specious for Soviet scientists to appeal for acquittal of Angela Davis when justice and equity are virtually non-existent in their own country. I think it would be helpful for the Russian scientists to come to America and watch the trial of Angela Davis and for representative Americans (including some of Miss Davis's friends) to go to Moscow and watch Soviet legal proceedings.

None of this, however, should cause us to forget the suffering Jews in the Soviet Union. Their plight reminds me of the Jews' captivity in Egypt and of God's great deliverance of them in the Exodus. It is difficult to understand why the communists are unwilling to allow the Jews--whom they hate and persecute--to emigrate to Israel. I should think that they not only would be delighted for them to depart but also would do all they could to encourage and assist them.

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### BRUTAL, AS ALWAYS

Connecticut Catholic Transcript - January 1, 1971

There is reason to believe that the sentences passed on 11 Soviet citizens for conspiracy to hijack an airplane were so severe not because of the seriousness of the crime these people were accused of contemplating, but because nine of their number are Jews.

Anti-Semitism is nothing new in Russia. In Khrushchev Remembers, Stalin's successor recalls the dreadful pogroms that he witnessed when a child in czarist Russia. And in that same book there is plenty of evidence, some inadvertent, of the crudest sort of anti-Semitism under official auspices in the Soviet era. The regime has relentlessly sought to suppress Jewish religion and culture.

At the same time, it has stonily refused the Jews' pleas to be allowed to emigrate to Israel. They are to be made to stay where they are and undergo the grinding out of their identity. The slightest evidence of a determination to get away is being draconially dealt with, because it represents the persistence of a hope which the authorities are determined to quench. Here is another instance of the brutal inhumanity of the Soviet system.

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### LOVE, JUSTICE AND THE JEWS

The Catholic Review - January 15, 1971

Baltimore, Md. -- Continuing evidence of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union may well be coupled with Moscow's participation in armed threats against the existence of Israel as an independent nation.

That evidence may become obscured if a minority group of militant U.S. Jews continues its announced policy of harassing Soviet diplomats in New York. Many of the Soviet diplomats in New York are, of course, identified with the United Nations. They have a right to

function, as diplomats, without interference.

No particular group, and no individuals, have been officially connected with criminal actions against Soviet facilities in the United States. Nobody knows who planted a bomb at the Soviet Embassy's cultural center in Washington a week ago, although Jewish extremists have--correctly or incorrectly--been generally blamed for the act.

In any event, President Nixon and Jewish leaders in 27 U.S. cities have expressed a sense of outrage over anti-Soviet attacks in this country.

Muriel Dobbins, writing in The Sun, reports that the White House has released telegrams exchanged by Mr. Nixon and 50 Jewish leaders, emphasizing that "irresponsible criminal actions" against Soviet facilities are harmful to the cause of Jews in Russia. Among Jewish businessmen condemning such acts on grounds that they are "morally wrong, injure the cause of Soviet Jews and undermine the cause of democracy in America" were two Baltimore men, Irving Blum and Jerold C. Hoffberger.

Jews throughout the world have long suffered at the hands of anti-Semitic forces, including Christians and atheists, but they have also obtained wide support because of a convincing moral posture. There is concern today that the moral position of Jews, in Israel and elsewhere, will be undermined by undemocratic and even criminal acts. That is why responsible Jewish leaders have been so quick to repudiate the threat of terrorism as an instrument of Jewish policy.

In London, the current issue of The Tablet begins its front-page comment with these words: "Anti-Semitism is endemic in Russia, as in most of Eastern Europe. Although in the early years of Russian communism Jews played a prominent and sinister part, present Soviet policy in the Middle East uses Jew-baiting as a handy tactic to impress the Arab world. The Leningrad trial of nine Jews for "intended hijacking and the coming trials of Jews for similar offenses is an expression of its latest phase."

(It would be unfortunate and improper to leave an impression, based on that brief extract from a long article, that Soviet Jews were alone in playing a 'prominent and sinister' role in developing the communistic state.)

Charlotte Saikowski, a staff correspondent for The Christian Science Monitor, writes this week from Moscow that "Jews have little weight in the party and government apparatus." She relates that Jews are thought to comprise 1.2 per cent of the population, although according to Soviet statistics, 7.6 per cent of the scientific workers in 1969

were Jewish.

It is understood that the refusal of Moscow authorities to permit the emigration of Jews to Israel is based on at least two major considerations: They do not want to lose qualified professional workers, and they do not want to increase either the population or the technical capabilities of Israel.

The conscience of the world demands a permanent end to anti-Semitism. There have been significant gains, as illustrated in a recent four-day conference at the Vatican between Catholics and Jews with a goal of destroying all forms of racism and discrimination.

Catholics, with a particular devotion to the Jewish mother of a Son who changed the course of history, have a permanent commitment to the inseparable qualities of love and justice.

AMERICAN \* \* \* JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
THE ONE-WAY STREET OF IRON

Catholic Universe Bulletin - January 8, 1971

Cleveland, Ohio -- Whether or not the nine Jews and two Gentiles who were sentenced for trying to steal a small plane to get out of the Soviet Union were victims of a secret police plot, two central facts are undeniable.

First: There are more than three million Jews in the Soviet Union, many of whom would like to go to Israel where they could freely practice their religion.

Second: Like everybody else in the USSR, the Jews are behind the iron curtain, which exists not to keep people out but to keep people in.

The iron curtain, evident in all its ugliness in such places as Berlin, is a standing insult to mankind. It is a hideous denial of the rights of humanity.

The right to emigrate was laid down by Pope John XXIII, in his encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) as one of the inalienable God-given rights of human beings. This right, like many others, is held in contempt by communist governments. And so we have the iron curtain; and so we have a show trial in Moscow of some people accused of trying to steal (not hijack) a small plane in which to fly to Israel because their right to go there had been denied.

"With profound concern," said Prime Minister Golda Meir of Israel in an address to an emergency session of Israel's parliament, "we have watched the growing severity of the Soviet authorities toward the Jews. And all of this for one crime and one alone: their request to the government of the Soviet Union to be allowed to leave and settle in Israel."

Only a fortnight earlier, the Soviet authorities had been accused by Archbishop Ambrose Senyshyn of genocide (murder of a people) perpetrated upon Catholic and Orthodox Christians in the Soviet-held Ukraine.

The communist contempt for human rights is not likely to change. But communist rulers -- whether in Russia, in Poland, in North Vietnam or wherever -- are not immune to world public opinion. The world should be tireless in reminding them that people have rights, and that mankind does not look kindly upon brutal suppression.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
\* \* \* \*  
ARCHIVES  
LET MY PEOPLE GO . . .

The Pilot - January 2, 1971

Boston, Mass. -- Our generation, which experienced the Nazi persecution of the Jews, seems destined to have to endure another, and hopefully lesser, version of Jewish oppression, this time in the Soviet Union. For many years there have been waves of anti-Semitic propaganda which are usually followed by one or another open assault on some area of the Jewish community. The pattern is now a familiar one, made increasingly complex by the existence of the state of Israel and the understandable desire of some Jews to emigrate to that state.

Although the Soviet Union officially announces that appeals for emigration will be honored, especially when they involve the uniting of families, the number of appeals granted is miniscule and these often wait many years for permission. In these circumstances the Jews of Russia are caught in a pincer that cannot fail to cause them pain. In their own country, they are deprived of those institutions which support their religious and cultural traditions, the things that make it possible to live as Jews. When they seek to leave the country, they are counted as disloyal and branded as criminals. It is a cruel dilemma that must be resolved.

The recent trial of the alleged skyjackers indicates how the pincer works in practice. Unable to leave the country any other way, some Jews are moved to desperate actions. When they act, they are caught, and then given the heaviest possible sentences, quite inconsistent

with the crime. This example of heavy-handed Soviet justice cannot be lost on other Jews and so they must choose to accept the status quo, difficult as it is, or risk life imprisonment or death.

There is, of course, an answer that is readily available, and it is not a new one. It is the same as that demanded by Moses of the Pharaohs centuries ago in a context not totally dissimilar "Let my people go..." can be answered in the affirmative and those Jews who wish can leave for their historic homeland in Palestine. The Soviet Union, which has appealed for clemency in the trial of the Basques, now has an opportunity to show its own good faith. It has the further opportunity of allowing peaceful emigration and, in effect, resolving the whole problem.

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#### ITALIAN LESSON

The Providence Visitor - December 30, 1970

Milan's distinguished newspaper, Corriere della Sera, once sent the noted writer, Indro Montanelli, to cover a diplomatic reception in New Delhi, India. The late Eleanor Roosevelt was the guest of honor. According to the Montanelli account, the former first lady's effusiveness in the receiving line was in direct proportion to the skin pigmentation of the various guests. She gushed over African notables, was slightly cooler to East Indians and awarded Britons, Italians and West Germans with mere perfunctory nods. The reportage was sophisticatedly European, biting satiric and possibly just a little bit malicious.

But the point established by Signor Montanelli was not a groundless one. Just as conservatives have something of a party line, so do liberals. The term "knee-jerk liberal" has been coined to describe those who wait until a party line has been laid down before they disclaim about human injustice. No one usually bothers to mention that hewing to such a line exacts a terrible price: the voluntary surrender of one's freedom to speak independently.

The failure of the liberal community to condemn roundly the latest savagery being perpetrated against Soviet Jews is lamentable. Perhaps the signal has not yet been given. One wonders, just when will it be given? Or will it be given? The trumped-up charges and anti-human verdict of the Leningrad court are as blatant an affront against the stanchions of civilization as anything that has hit the front pages over the past decade. Whoever gives the signal should certainly lose no time in doing so. The fact that Jews happen to be white and live

half a world away should not exempt them from the solicitude which is usually lavished upon those who are deprived of ordinary justice. Locally, one can only hope that Rabbi Saul Leeman's plea will not fall upon deaf ears. Strong letters of protest should be written. At a time of year when the festivities of Christmas and Hanukkah coincide, the silence of so many people of all faiths constitutes betrayal of passivity. It seems to give new validity to the term "knee-jerk liberal." While we fully deplore the deprivation of human rights experienced by patient sufferers in all societies, including our own, we puzzle over the general insouciance of the world press in its apathy toward people who desire only a basic human right; to be united with members of their own faith and culture. The expression of such a wish has marked off two people for the firing squad. Surely this should be worth a ringing poem or two from the Berrigan pen. May we look forward to one? Or must we wait for that mysterious puppeteer, whoever he may be, to pull his magic string and thus trigger the irresistible signal?

Indro Montanelli saw these inconsistencies within the liberal establishment with much older eyes than ours because he was a European. We think it is fair to say that his eyes, while slightly more cynical than ours, were certainly much less naive.

The true liberal humanitarian responds on his own to genuine need. He is impervious to what others have determined to be the priorities. He is objectively disinterested in the creedal backgrounds of those whom he helps and he is absolutely colorblind.

This was the Montanelli recipe. It is as valid today as the day he wrote it.

One need not be an accomplished reader of Italian in order to get the point.