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NEWS

FROM THE

COMMITTEE



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE Institute of Human Relations, 165 E. 56 St., New York, N.Y. 10022, (212) 751-4000

The American Jewish Committee, founded in 1906, is the pioneer human-relations agency in the United States. It protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people.

MORTON YARMON, Director of Public Relations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK, Feb. 11... The following statement was issued today by Howard I. Friedman, President of the American Jewish Committee, and Dr. David M. Gordis, AJC Executive Vice President.

"It is with great joy and relief that the American Jewish Committee welcomes the news of Anatoly Scharansky's release from imprisonment and arrival in the West.

"During the nearly nine years of indescribable suffering Scharansky endured in Soviet labor camps for his desire to live in Israel with his wife Avital, he has come to embody the heroic struggle of Jews in the U.S.S.R. for their right to live as Jews and to leave in accordance with international agreements to which Moscow is signatory.

"We acknowledge with deepest appreciation the role of the U.S. Government in securing Scharansky's release, and the unwavering support over the years of members of Congress, leaders of other Western governments, and Jews and non-Jews alike.

"At the same time that we rejoice in Scharansky's freedom, we are ever mindful of the tens of thousands of other Soviet Jews who remain behind, denied the opportunity for exit visas. We reaffirm our pledge to continue our efforts until they, too, are able to establish new lives in Israel and be reunited with their families. We call on the Kremlin to release these men and women, and, further, to end the plight of the distinguished Nobel Laureate Andrei Sakharov, condemned to isolation and internal exile in Gorky. In so doing, the U.S.S.R. would make an important contribution to an improvement in East-West cooperation and understanding."

The American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. Founded in 1906, it combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people everywhere.

Attached is a background paper on "Anatoly Scharansky and Soviet Jewry in the Wake of the Summit" by David A. Harris, Deputy Director of the American Jewish Committee's International Relations Department.

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ANATOLY SCHARANSKY AND
SOVIET JEWRY IN THE WAKE OF THE SUMMIT

by

David A. Harris, Deputy Director,
International Relations Department

Together with millions of other people around the world, I spent several days holding my breath, praying silently and passing each hour with a radio glued to one ear. Could this latest report, unlike so many previous others, of the imminent release of Anatoly Scharansky be accurate? Would he, a moral giant of the Jewish people and a name synonymous with the struggle for repatriation to Israel, finally be released almost nine years after his arrest? Would the unimaginable suffering and agony he endured in Soviet prisons and labor camps be over? Would he finally be permitted to join his wife Avital, whose unstinting devotion to her husband's cause has inspired people everywhere, after 11 1/2 years of separation? Would his elderly mother's courage and perseverance in support of her beleaguered son no longer be necessary? Would the unstinting efforts of President Reagan and Secretary of State Shultz, Members of Congress, foreign leaders and private citizens everywhere at last yield results? Would Anatoly Scharansky's profound faith, stated so eloquently during his trial in Moscow in July 1978, finally be redeemed? At that time, he said: "For more than 2,000 years the Jewish people, my people, have been dispersed. But wherever they are, wherever Jews are found, every year they have repeated, 'Next year in Jerusalem.' Now, when I am further than ever from my people, from Avital, facing many years of imprisonment, I say, turning to my people, my Avital: Next year in Jerusalem." Would it be this year, and not next, in Jerusalem?

We rejoice in the news of his release and reunification with Avital. We are humbled by his indescribable courage, and inspired by his faith. At the same time, it is difficult to overlook the fact that his release, as welcome and important as it truly is, is not necessarily the result of an altruistic, humanitarian gesture on the Soviets' part. Rather, it serves four very concrete purposes for the Kremlin: 1) It is part of an exchange involving spies, hence permitting Moscow to maintain its original contention that Scharansky was in the employ of the C.I.A. (Note: Scharansky always denied the espionage charge. Had he yielded to extreme Soviet pressure to admit to the accusation, he might well have been released years ago.) 2) It generates favorable media attention for the Soviets at a time when the battle for Western public opinion is being waged fiercely by the Kremlin. 3) It serves to rid

Moscow of one of the two preeminent human rights symbols, together with Andrei Sakharov, within its borders. 4) It returns several key East Bloc agents.

Is Scharansky's release, nevertheless, a genuine signal by the Kremlin? As much as one would like to believe so, the prevailing condition of Soviet Jewry gives serious pause. Consider:

- * The emigration rate which was inching upwards from a mere 29 in August 1985 to 128 in November, the month of the summit, has now reversed direction. 92 people left in December and only 79 in January.
- * On January 8, Vladimir Lifshits, a Leningrad refusenik, was arrested on a charge of anti-Soviet propaganda and now faces trial.
- * On January 17, seven young Jews in the Leningrad area participated in an Oneg Shabbat celebration. The party was disrupted by the local police who accompanied the group to the local police station, beating a few along the way and threatening them with expulsion from university and military conscription. They were interrogated about their Jewish activities and study of Torah, and accused of holding a private religious ceremony.
- * Inna Meiman, the wife of mathematician Naum Meiman, has been suffering from a growing tumor on the back of her neck, near her spinal column, for more than two years. The only apparent remaining hope for treatment, after four painful and ultimately unsuccessful operations in Moscow, is at one of a few oncological centers in the West which have the sophisticated equipment to treat the cancerous growth. Despite countless appeals, the Kremlin has adamantly refused the Meimans permission to travel to the West for medical care, citing Professor Meiman's classified work -- work performed more than 30 years ago!
- * And despite all the focus on Elena Bonner's visit to the West for medical treatment and a visit with her family in Boston, she will soon rejoin her husband, Andrei Sakharov, in an exile that, in everything but name, is the equivalent of imprisonment in remote Gorky. Sakharov, a non-Jew, is truly one of the outstanding figures of this century -- an extraordinarily courageous man dedicated to peace and to human rights, and a righteous Gentile if ever one lives today.

How, then, does one interpret current Kremlin policy? It is to remain tough at home as a signal that no loosening of the reins is in the offing. On the other hand, for Western consumption, it pursues a two-pronged strategy. First, the staggered release of a few prominent figures, such as long-term refuseniks Mark Nashpitz, Yakov Mesh, Eliyahu Essas and Yakov Gorodetsky, succeeds in generating positive publicity

for the Soviets at relatively little cost and serves equally to deflect attention from the stark reality facing the Soviet Jewish community. Second, the traditional Soviet campaign of disinformation abroad continues apace. In this regard, events of the last year are revealing:

1) In January 1985, Soviet State Bank Chairman Alkhimov told U.S. Undersecretary of Commerce Olmer that if good relations with the U.S. were restored, 50,000 Jewish emigrants annually would be "no problem." After a flurry of Western press attention and U.S. interest in studying the apparent opening, the Soviets subsequently denied the story.

2) Three months later, optimism was again generated when the New York Times carried a front-page story from Moscow that as many as 1,000 Jews, including long-term refuseniks, were reportedly being summoned to OVIR (visa office) and being issued exit visas, but alas, nothing resulted.

3) In July, at a meeting with the Israeli envoy in Paris, Soviet Ambassador Vorontsov indicated his country's preparedness to move forward on diplomatic relations in exchange for Soviet participation in the Middle East peace process and Israeli flexibility on the Golan Heights issue. Much media attention was given the story, but no real progress has occurred.

4) Reports, originating in Moscow, of an imminent release of 15-20,000 Soviet Jews and their transfer to Israel via Warsaw, have appeared in many Anglo-Jewish papers this fall. To date, though, nothing has happened.

5) During his visit to France in October, Soviet leader Gorbachev addressed the emigration question by noting that the Soviet Union "solves" the problem of family reunification, refusing permission "only where state secrets are involved." In such cases, added Gorbachev, applicants can leave after waiting between five and ten years. Despite these well-publicized assertions, the several thousand long-term refuseniks with close relatives in Israel and elsewhere, whose first applications were submitted as long ago as 1970, offer ample proof of the inaccuracy of the claim. And, a shrewd and sophisticated communicator, Gorbachev also used the occasion to speak of Soviet Jews as a "privileged nationality," yet another element of the Soviet disinformation campaign.

6) Finally, there was the New York Times front-page story on December 26, headlined "Russian Said to Predict Israeli Ties And Increased Jewish Emigration," referring to a Soviet Embassy official in Washington. TASS, the Soviet news agency, later denied the story.

If Moscow genuinely seeks to send an unambiguously positive message, it should follow the advice of Anthony Lewis (New York Times, March 14, 1985): "What is needed as a signal is evident: not words but convincing action by the Soviet Union." What would be convincing

action? In my view, it would mean significant progress towards the goals of the institution of an orderly process of repatriation to Israel and reunification of families with a definite time limit on those cases involving previous security clearance, a resolution of the prisoner of conscience and long-term refusenik cases, an end to harassment of Jewish activists and arrests on trumped-up charges, and a guarantee of the religious and cultural rights for Jews (including the right to study Hebrew) given to other Soviet citizens.

If movement can be truly made in these areas, it will doubtless be welcomed in this country and contribute to further progress in other dimensions of the bilateral relationship, not to speak of a more general improvement in the "atmospherics" that can play such an important role in shaping the direction of superpower relations.

In the meantime, welcome Anatoly. We pledge that our efforts will not cease until all in whose name you struggled so valiantly will be able to join you and Avigal in Israel.

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THE LONG ORDEAL IS OVER -- FREE AT LAST**THE ROAD TO FREEDOM**

By David Kantor

BONN, Feb. 11 (JTA) — Anatoly Shcharansky stepped into the world of freedom Tuesday. The 38-year-old Soviet Jewish dissident and aliya activist who became a symbol of the worldwide struggle for human rights during his eight-year ordeal in Soviet prisons and forced labor camps, arrived in Israel Tuesday night to a hero's welcome. (Arrival story, P. 4.)

Shcharansky was released by the Soviets Tuesday morning as part of an East-West spy swap and was flown immediately from West Berlin to Frankfurt. There he was re-united with his wife Avital, who flew from Israel to meet him. It was in Frankfurt, too, that he received his Israeli passport, presented to him personally by Israel's Ambassador to West Germany, Yitzhak Ben Ari. Anatoly had first applied for an emigration visa in 1974.

(In Israel, President Chaim Herzog and Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir issued special statements welcoming Shcharansky. See P. 3 for texts of their statements.)

The prisoner exchange took place at the middle of the Glienicke Bridge which connects West Berlin with Potsdam in East Germany. Shcharansky was one of nine persons involved. Five were suspected or convicted Eastern bloc agents imprisoned in the U.S. or West Germany. Three were Western agents imprisoned for espionage in Communist bloc countries.

Shcharansky was arrested in 1978 allegedly for spying for the U.S. But the charges against him were regarded as patently false in the West. The 13-year sentence imposed, of which he served eight years, was seen as punishment for his activism on behalf of Jewish and other dissidents and his indefatigable struggle for the right of himself and other Russian Jews to emigrate.

Separated From Other Exchanged Prisoners

At the insistence of the U.S., Shcharansky was driven across the bridge alone, to underline the fact that he was not a spy. The other exchanged prisoners followed in a minibus.

A German government official confirmed this. Shcharansky, he said, was not a spy but a human rights activist. It was the Soviets who insisted that he could be given his freedom only within the framework of a spy exchange. West German sources denied categorically that the Soviets received any payment for releasing Shcharansky.

A line of parked buses blocked the view of what was happening at the eastern end of the bridge. The exchange ceremonies in the center were brief. Shcharansky, slight of build, wearing a grey coat and a brown "chapka," the traditional Russian fur cap, smiled and waved at the small crowd of reporters and spectators waiting at the western side. He was only glimpsed by them.

He was surrounded by dozens of officials, greeted personally by U.S. Ambassador to West Germany Richard Burt, and whisked away to Tempelhof Airport in the back seat of a grey Mercedes limousine flying the Stars and Stripes on its fenders.

Reporters and onlookers said Shcharansky seemed to be in good health and visibly enjoying his new freedom. He walked swiftly and confidently to the waiting limousine, barely glancing at the battery of TV cameras aimed at him from behind police barricades.

At Frankfurt Airport he was allowed a half hour of privacy with Avital in the VIP lounge before the couple was surrounded by officials and jubilant well-wishers. They had not seen each other for 12 years, during which Avital campaigned tirelessly and unremittingly all over the world, but especially in the U.S., for release of her husband.

Shcharansky's spirit was never broken during his harsh ordeal in the Soviet Gulag. But for long periods it appeared he would not survive. He reportedly developed a heart condition. When Avital flew to Frankfurt from Israel she was accompanied by a cardiologist.

No Medical Problems Found

But the doctor who examined Shcharansky at Frankfurt Airport said he found no medical problems and pronounced him fit to fly to Israel without delay. Shcharansky thanked his American, German and Israeli hosts before boarding the plane. He told well-wishers that he had been given good food during the final weeks of his incarceration and apparently regained most of the weight he had lost.

A PROFILE OF COURAGE

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 (JTA) — The release Tuesday of Soviet Jewish Prisoner of Conscience Anatoly Shcharansky as part of an East-West exchange of prisoners brings to a close one of the most celebrated human rights cases which drew international attention and the concern of numerous government leaders and politicians.

Nearly nine years after he was bundled into a car by Soviet secret police agents on Gorky Street in Moscow to later be tried on charges of treason, in a move by Soviet authorities with few precedents since the days of Stalin, Shcharansky's name became synonymous with Soviet human rights violations and the harsh realities of life for Jews in the Soviet Union.

Now, with his release, he will once again be reunited with his wife Avital, who emigrated from the Soviet Union in July, 1974, just one day after they were married by a rabbi in Moscow, a marriage Soviet officials later declared invalid. Although she had not seen her husband since that time, Avital's tireless efforts on his behalf are credited with keeping Shcharansky's name in the forefront of international public opinion.

Born in the Ukrainian city of Donetsk on January 20, 1948, the son of a journalist and Communist Party member, Shcharansky graduated from the Moscow Institute's Physics Department of Computers and Applied Mathematics in June 1972. An expert in computer technology and cybernetics, he began work for a research institute connected with the oil and gas industry.

Shcharansky's application to emigrate was denied in 1974 on the grounds that "it is against state interests." He soon became the subject of continuous harassment, surveillance and interrogation as he joined the growing ranks of Soviet Jewish refuseniks. At times, as many as eight KGB agents trailed him to monitor his activities.

In early 1975, he was fired from his job at the Moscow Research Institute. In March 1975, after a series of arrests, he was reportedly informed by the KGB: "Your destiny is in our hands ... No one in the West is interested in you and what you are doing here and nobody will say a word in the entire world if there is one more Prisoner of Conscience in the Soviet Union."

Shcharansky became active in the Helsinki Watch groups formed to monitor Soviet compliance with the Helsinki rights accords. More important, he served as a key link between Jews seeking to emigrate and Russians and others wanting to stay and liberalize the society.

David Shipler, The New York Times correspondent in Moscow when Shcharansky was arrested, wrote in 1977 that "he was a consummate public relations man, fluent in English and scrupulously accurate with his facts, who acted as a spokesman to the Western press on behalf of Jewish activists."

"As such, he was part of a chain that Soviet authorities ... found threatening, a chain of communications that runs from the dissidents through Western correspondents to worldwide publications and back into the Soviet Union again via foreign radio stations such as BBC and the Voice of America."

Suit Claims Defamation Of Soviet Jews

In 1977, Shcharansky filed suit along with fellow activist Vladimir Slepak — whose emigration visa has still not been approved — and claimed that Soviet Jews were defamed as a result of the broadcasts of a blatantly anti-Semitic television documentary, "Buyers of Souls," which was apparently aimed at the Soviet masses.

Shcharansky soon found himself the subject of a vicious attack in an article written by Dr. Sanya Lipavsky, a former roommate, and published in the Soviet newspaper Izvestia. Lipavsky accused the Soviet activist of working for the Central Intelligence Agency, a charge vehemently denied by Shcharansky, and also by then-President Jimmy Carter.

Ten days after the Izvestia article, Shcharansky was arrested and detained in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison until his trial in July, 1978. He was convicted on charges of "treason" and "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" and sentenced to 13 years in prison and labor camps. He began his term at Chistopol Prison, 500 miles east of Moscow.

Throughout his 18-month detention, while awaiting trial, Shcharansky was held incommunicado, unable to see or speak to anyone except the Soviet secret police. He was also not permitted legal counsel, despite relentless efforts by his family to secure an attorney for him.

A Passionate Defense

But Shcharansky defended himself, despite being convinced that his was "a hopeless case from the very beginning — all the more so since I was declared guilty by Izvestia a full year-and-a-half before my trial took place and even before the case was opened and the investigation began."

"My people," Shcharansky continued, "have been oppressed all over the world for 2,000 years. Yet, in every place in which they found themselves, they said again and again, 'Next year in Jerusalem.' Now, when I am further than ever from my people and my Avital, when I face long hard years of imprisonment, I turn to my people and my Avital and

say: 'Next year in Jerusalem. Next year in Jerusalem!'" Shcharansky's plight drew international attention and soon became an issue continually placed on the U.S.-Soviet agenda. Carter spoke out on his behalf, as did numerous Congressmen and lay and religious leaders. As the Kremlin clamped down on Jewish emigration, Shcharansky's picture soon adorned placards carried by demonstrators urging his freedom and an easing of the plight of Jews in the Soviet Union.

In March, 1980, Shcharansky was transferred from Chistopol to the Perm Labor Camp in the Urals. In April, his mother, Ida Milgrom, and brother, Leonid, were permitted to visit him for 24 hours — the first time since his initial imprisonment in 1978 that he was allowed visitors. The following September, they were again granted a visitation permit for a brief period, under heavy guard.

But Shcharansky's health began to deteriorate. He wrote a letter complaining of severe stomach and back pains. In early 1981, he was placed in solitary confinement which, in addition to poor food rations, led to a further deterioration in his health. All of his scheduled meetings in 1981 with family members were abruptly cancelled, and his letter-writing allotment was reduced.

In November of 1981, a surprise transfer once again brought Shcharansky back to Chistopol Prison. It was here, in September, 1982, on the eve of Yom Kippur, that Shcharansky began a hunger strike that would last 109 days.

The strike was to protest prison officials' confiscation of his mail and the refusal to allow him to receive visits from his family, despite such allowances under the Soviet penal system. At the same time, international support for Shcharansky's release began to gain momentum.

Many Appeals Issued

An appeal, one of the many, was addressed to French President Francois Mitterrand by exiled Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov, urging the French leader to intervene on Shcharansky's behalf. There were also efforts to negotiate an exchange of Major Aleksei Koslov, a KGB spy held captive in South Africa, for the release of Shcharansky. That effort was unsuccessful. Meanwhile, President Reagan also urged his freedom.

Shcharansky's hunger strike, however, led to an unusual move by then-Soviet leader Yuri Andropov. He sent a letter, dated January 18, 1983, in which he stated that Shcharansky "had contact with his mother and ceased his hunger strike" in Chistopol and that "there is no threat to his life." The letter was in response to an inquiry from French Communist Party leader Georges Marchais.

The hunger strike left Shcharansky in critical condition, and during a visit by his mother and brother to Chistopol, he complained of being unable to sleep because of chest pains. In January, 1984, he again went on a hunger strike, though only for two days, to protest the blocking of mail sent to his wife, Avital.

In October, 1984, word was received that Shcharansky had been sent once again to the Perm Labor Camp where he was immediately hospitalized in a "pre-heart attack" condition. He was given medical treatment. Milgrom spent two days with her son there on January 14 and 15, 1985. In January, 1986, Avital said her husband had been sentenced to a new six-month term in a labor camp for going on still another hunger strike, again protesting restricted mail privileges. And then it happened — word was out last week that Shcharansky would be released and allowed to go to Israel.

THE BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER CHAI

WEST BERLIN, Feb. 11 (JTA) — The Glienicke Bridge, across which Anatoly Shcharansky walked to freedom Tuesday morning, spans a river as frozen as the East-West relations that left Germany, and Berlin itself, sundered in two after the end of the Second World War.

Only military vehicles of the former allies are allowed to use the iron-girdered bridge with its green metal spans, to and from the westernmost point of the West Berlin district of Zehlendorf to Potsdam, once almost a Berlin suburb and now part of East Germany.

The Havel River across which the Glienicke stretches was iced over in today's sub-zero weather, with swans and ducks struggling to survive on the frozen surface. Under the bridge, the ice had been broken yesterday by an East German icebreaker to allow passage of patrol boats and barges.

The bridge was damaged in World War II and rebuilt. The Soviet authorities, shortly after the division of Germany into zones of allied occupation, named its half of the Glienicke the "Bridge of Unity." The title, however, was dropped after the Berlin wall was erected in 1961.

Some time later, a plaque was placed at the entrance to the Western side of the bridge. It read, "Those who gave the bridge the name 'Bridge of Unity' built the wall, put up barbed wire ... and thus prevent freedom."

Tuesday's spy swap caps a history of such exchanges at the bridge, going back to the first major such deal in 1962. In that year, American pilot Francis Gary Powers, whose spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union and who was tried and imprisoned there, was exchanged for Soviet agent Rudolf Abel.

The windswept Glienicke Bridge, floodlit at night, subsequently served as the locale of various and sundry cloak-and-dagger derring-do in spy novels and films. None, perhaps, match the sheer-life drama of Tuesday's events, when one of the most celebrated Soviet dissidents crossed the white line at the center of the Glienicke Bridge to a new life.

It was a freezing cold day, but the sun shone in all its winter brilliance.

STATEMENT BY HERZOG

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 11 (JTA) — President Chaim Herzog issued a special statement Tuesday welcoming the release of Anatoly Shcharansky and greeting him with the traditional Hebrew blessing: "Blessed be He who frees the prisoners."

The English text read over Israel Radio by Herzog said:

"Anatoly Shcharansky, a Prisoner of Zion, has become an example and a symbol. His struggle and his bravery gave courage to our brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union and inspired them in their struggle for their natural rights, both human and national, to study their traditions, their culture and the Hebrew language, and above all, to join their brothers and sisters in their homeland in the State of Israel.

"Anatoly Shcharansky has become a symbol for all freedom and human rights fighters throughout the world. His struggle has been a source of national identification for the Jewish people, and yet another example of the resilience of the Jewish spirit.

"Many of his fellows in the battle for human rights are still in the Soviet Union. He will not forget them, nor will we weaken in our resolve to continue in our efforts for their freedom.

"Anatoly Shcharansky did not sin, nor did he violate any law. He is a free man who fought a stubborn fight to maintain his Jewish identity and to live as a proud Jew, to live amongst his people in his homeland.

"On his arrival home, with the realization of his long-hoped-for dream, he will be received with open arms and deep affection. I trust that our natural tendency to smother him with affection and good will will not hinder him from joining his wife, Avital, in making their joint dream of years come true, and in permitting him to build a happy home amongst us in peace and harmony.

"Our admiration and respect go out to Avital, who fought untiringly for Anatoly and the remaining Prisoners of Zion. Welcome home, Anatoly. May many others follow you."

In his Hebrew statement, Herzog paid tribute and expressed Israel's thanks to President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz for their endeavors to effect Shcharansky's release.

STATEMENT BY SHAMIR

JERUSALEM, Feb. 11 (JTA) — Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, in his speech at the World Conference of Friendship Leagues, said:

"Anatoly Shcharansky has become a symbol of the struggle of hundreds and thousands for freedom from Soviet oppression and for repatriation to Israel. Like many Soviet Jews, he came to realize that his future as an active, self-respecting member of the Jewish people lies only in Israel.

"He fought for his rights as a human being and as a Jew. He paid a heavy price, in imprisonment, suffering, torture, both mental and physical, and separation from his wife and family. Together with Avital Shcharansky, we rejoice in his newly-acquired freedom and his coming home to the land of his forefathers.

"But we must not for a moment forget that our struggle is for the many hundreds of thousands who remain behind, who are suffering and who are longing for freedom and deliverance, who rely first and foremost on us, on the Jewish State of Israel and you here in this conference and on all the friends of freedom all over the world to secure their salvation and their repatriation.

"We cannot fail them."

RELIEF AND REGRETS IN WASHINGTON

By Judith Kohn

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 (JTA) — The release of Soviet Prisoner of Conscience Anatoly Shcharansky was greeted here Tuesday with welcome relief, tempered by regrets that it had to come about as part of an exchange of spies and by concern for the fate of the many thousands of refuseniks as well as imprisoned Jewish activists who remain behind.

President Reagan was scheduled to hold a news conference Tuesday evening in which he was expected to comment himself on Shcharansky's release. In the meantime, the Administration indicated that Shcharansky's release was the result of "close cooperation over an extended period of time" with the West German government.

The Reagan Administration had special praise for West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl whose government, according to statements from the White House and State Department, had made a "substantial contribution" to the prisoner exchange.

Administration officials declined to elaborate privately on what role the West German government had played or on any other specifics about the exchange arrangements, saying that a similar policy has been maintained in previous prisoner exchanges with the Sov-

iets. Some of the spies released to the Soviet Union Tuesday had been in West German prisons. The State Department stressed that the inclusion of the celebrated Jewish human rights activist in an exchange of spies was in no way a retreat from the Administration's categorical rejection of the espionage charge for which Shcharansky had been sentenced to serve 13 years in prison and labor camps.

"We do not consider this to be a spy case," State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb said Tuesday. "There have been in the past releases of human rights activists; they have in fact taken place."

"As a matter of fact, we consider Shcharansky's release to be an additional and separate benefit to a package arrangement which otherwise deals with intelligence matters on both sides," the spokesman added. He said that the Administration "would have preferred that the Soviets simply release Shcharansky" but that Moscow had long refused to do that.

Leaders of Jewish organizations hailed the release of Shcharansky but also stressed that the fight on behalf of Soviet Jewry is not over yet and that thousands of Jews are still waiting in the USSR to receive permission to emigrate. (Full story in Thursday's Bulletin.)

SHCHARANSKY COMES HOME

By David Landau

TEL AVIV, Feb. 11 (JTA) — Anatoly Shcharansky, happily reunited with his wife Avital after 12 years of separation while he was in Soviet prisons and labor camps, stepped on Israel soil at Ben Gurion Airport Tuesday evening to a jubilant and joyfully tearful welcome.

Premier Shimon Peres, who warmly embraced the Soviet Jewish dissident and aliya activist on his repatriation to Israel, his chosen homeland, declared: "It is a moving moment for the whole of the Jewish people, may I say for everybody in the world who loves freedom and who hopes that freedom will prevail."

Shcharansky flew to Israel from Frankfurt, West Germany in the same private executive jet that took his wife to Frankfurt earlier Tuesday for their reunion. He was freed Tuesday morning in West Berlin as part of an East-West prisoner exchange.

The throngs that came to greet him, many in chartered buses from all parts of Israel, remained behind barriers during the official ceremonies. Shcharansky was embraced by Peres, by Foreign Minister and Deputy Premier Yitzhak Shamir, Absorption Minister Yaacov Tsur, other dignitaries and rabbis who had helped and befriended Avital Shcharansky in her long struggle to gain her husband's freedom.

'A Very Unique Moment'

Peres gave his welcoming speech, first in Hebrew, then in English in the airport's VIP lounge. "It is a very unique moment in the experiences and feelings of our people," he said.

"I do believe that the hearts of all Jewish people beat today as though it were the very same heart. Anatoly Shcharansky, who has already adopted the Hebrew name, Nathan, has fought heroically alone, under tremendous pressure, against so many difficult odds as a proud Jew, as a freedom-loving person, as a man with a mission, as a devoted Zionist, and taught that you can arrest a body, you cannot imprison a spirit. Faith prevails even against the

strongest of governments, and against the most difficult circumstances." The Premier also praised Avital who, he said, "fought like a lioness" for her husband's freedom.

Greetings were also extended by Shamir. Shcharansky responded in fluent but hesitant Hebrew, a language he had taught himself. He spoke briefly of his difficult years in prison, buoyed by the hope that one day he would reach Israel. The 38-year-old dissident arrived and remained bare-headed throughout the proceedings. His wife's head was covered by a scarf which is traditional among Orthodox Jewish women.

The couple was driven from the airport directly to the Western Wall in Jerusalem. From there they were taken to the home provided for them by the Immigration Ministry.

Irwin Cotler, the Canadian lawyer and law professor at McGill University who defended Shcharansky at his trial, arrived in Israel Tuesday to join the welcoming party for the freed activist. He told reporters that the timing of Shcharansky's release seemed significant. He said the Jewish dissident had become a burden to the Soviets and they were looking for a "fig leaf" to cover their embarrassment.

REAGAN TO SHCHARANSKY: 'MAZEL TOV'

TEL AVIV, Feb. 11 (JTA) — President Reagan spoke to Anatoly Shcharansky and his wife, Avital, by telephone at Ben Gurion Airport Tuesday evening. Premier Shimon Peres put through the call to the White House to thank the President for his help in gaining freedom for the Soviet Jewish Prisoner of Conscience.

"Mazel tov," Reagan said when Peres handed the phone to Shcharansky, who then passed it on to his wife to receive the President's good wishes. Both gave their thanks. Peres said he also planned to thank Chancellor Helmut Kohl of West Germany for his part in Tuesday's prisoner exchange that brought Shcharansky his freedom.

SHCHARANSKY'S FAMILY ECSTATIC

PARIS, Feb. 11 (JTA) — Anatoly Shcharansky's family in Moscow was described as "ecstatic" by French Radio reports. His mother, Ida Milgrom, is said to have broken into tears of happiness as she heard reports that her son had crossed the bridge to freedom. His brother Leonid said, "This will give all of us new hope."

The radio quoted Leonid as saying that now that his brother had left, he and his mother will also apply for exit visas. Leonid, an engineer and one year older than Anatoly, said, "We did not apply for exit visas before because we did not want to risk leaving Anatoly here alone. Now, all is changed and we hope to leave also."

NEW YORK (JTA) — Ruth Popkin, president of Hadassah, announced Tuesday that the organization will be providing immediate medical attention for Anatoly Shcharansky, who arrived in Israel today. Shcharansky will be receiving a complete check-up and medical care by a team from the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center headed by Dr. Mervyn Gotsman, head of the department of cardiology, who is also the personal physician of former Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

tr. Laurentbaum, D. Harris, file

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A Thorn Removed

THERE WERE no toasts or trumpet flourishes, no public pronouncements of goodwill. In the gelid stillness of a subzero Berlin morning, the transaction took on the prosaic quality of a real-estate closing. A few formalities, handshakes all around, and Anatoly B. Shcharansky was off to a new land, a new life, a new freedom.

Imprisoned since 1978 on trumped-up charges of espionage, Mr. Shcharansky had become the most prominent symbol of the *refusenik* movement. To the Soviet leadership, he was a constant embarrassment, a reminder of the limits to even the most totalitarian regime's ability to silence its critics. The greater the punishment inflicted on Mr. Shcharansky, the louder his indictment of the Soviet system echoed in the West.

Mr. Shcharansky's release thus may represent nothing more than the Soviet leadership's latest, subtlest attempt to bump its detractors out of the international spotlight. Soviet officials appear to have concluded that their former prisoner will be a smaller liability in the West than in a Soviet labor camp, where he served as a living monument to religious oppression.

Americans err if they view Mr. Shcharansky's liberation as a simple triumph of good over evil. It was that, of course — but only coincidentally. Funda-

Why Soviets Let Shcharansky Go

mentally it was a pragmatic, calculated Soviet response to an assessment of their self-interest. Yet it's precisely this sort of cost-benefit analysis that is most likely to impel Soviet leaders in the direction of real emigration reform.

It would be naive to conclude that Mr. Shcharansky's release signals fundamental changes in Soviet leaders' attitude toward the *refuseniks*. For the sad fact is that Jewish emigration from the USSR has dwindled to a trickle in recent years. So while the release of high-profile prisoners such as Mr. Shcharansky is cause for joy, there is no evidence that it portends relief for thousands of lesser-known *refuseniks* who yearn just as fervently for deliverance.

But a Soviet leadership shrewd enough to perceive the extent of Mr. Shcharansky's influence may yet come to understand that every prisoner of conscience poses a similar liability. By raising their voices on behalf of those who remain behind, Westerners may help Mikhail Gorbachev conclude that a humanitarian emigration policy is the most cost-effective way to excise this continuing Soviet embarrassment.

A NEW LIFE FOR ANATOLY AND AVITAL

By Gil Sedan and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Feb. 12 (JTA) — Anatoly Shcharansky stood on Mt. Scopus last night for a few moments and contemplated the twinkling lights of Jerusalem, rising and falling among the hills and valleys that are the geography of this city he had never seen before but knew intimately from descriptions in the letters his wife, Avital, sent him during his nine years in Soviet prisons and labor camps.

His thoughts during those moments are not known. But he may well have recalled the day in 1978 when he heard a Soviet court sentence him to 13 years' imprisonment — allegedly for spying for the U.S. — and responded aloud, "Now, more than ever, I tell my Avital and my people: 'Next year in Jerusalem!'"

He was here now, at the end of probably the happiest and most joyfully tumultuous day of his life: his early morning crossing of a bridge from East Germany to West Berlin, the first step on his march to freedom; his flight to Frankfurt for reunion with Avital Shcharansky whom he had not seen since their wedding day in Moscow, July 4, 1974; the flight to Israel and the hero's welcome at Ben Gurion Airport; his telephone conversation with President Reagan from the airport VIP lounge — the call to the White House put through by Premier Shimon Peres.

His brief pause at a tourist lookout on Mt. Scopus was a private interlude between the cheering crowds at the airport and 3,000 ecstatic well-wishers who a few minutes later would surround him and Avital at the Western Wall.

Anatoly's Statement At The Airport

In his statement at the airport, delivered in fluent, almost accentless English, Shcharansky acknowledged the "storm of compliments which were poured on Avital's and my head." They "do not make the task to speak easier," he said.

"But what makes it really easier is understanding the fact that all these compliments we must share between all the people of Israel, between many people all over the world, among Jews in the Soviet Union who continue the struggle for their rights. And the congratulations which we hear now concern not only the two of us, but also all those people, Jews and non-Jews, people from the high political and grass-roots level whose struggle made this day possible."

Shcharansky has been described as an aliya activist and a dissident. The two roles were intertwined, for as he fought passionately for the right of himself and his fellow Russian Jews to emigrate, he battled with equal courage for the rights of other Russians, non-Jews such as Nobel Laureate physicist Andrei Sakharov, to speak out and act for human rights and dignity against the oppression of the Soviet regime, though not against the regime itself.

He made that point in his airport statement when he said: "Of course there is absolutely no plot among Jewish activists against the system of the Soviet Union, but we do have very strong spiritual contacts, connections with this land (Israel), and no persecutions can break this connection."

"On this happiest day of our lives, I am not going to forget those whom I left behind in the camps, in the prisons, who are still struggling for their right to emigrate, for their human rights. And I hope that that enthusiasm, that energy, that joy which fills our hearts today, Avital's and mine, will help us to continue the struggle for the freedom and the rights of our brothers in Russia."

Peres telephoned Reagan from the airport last night to say, "Thank you, in the name of the people and government of Israel, for your concern and your efforts that brought this very special man here, to his homeland, after 8 years in prison." Peres told the President that the freeing of Shcharansky was a great victory for the human spirit and for freedom-loving people.

Telephone Conversation With Reagan

When Peres passed the phone to Anatoly, Shcharansky said: "Dear Mr. President. I am under strong stress now, sitting between our Prime Minister and my Avital. That's why don't be surprised if my speech will not be smooth. But there are some things which I feel obliged to tell you."

"First of all, I know how great was your role in this greatest event of my and my wife's life That fact that I could join my people today in Israel, and, of course we are both very deeply grateful to you for this. Secondly, as you know very well, I was never an American spy. But I had wide contacts with many American politicians, journalists, lawyers and other public figures as a spokesman of the Jewish national movement and the Helsinki (Watch) group movement."

"And that's why I know very well how deeply is the concern of all your people and with the problems of human rights all over the world. I know what a great role is played by your country in these problems. And I want to ask you to inform all your people about our deepest gratitude to these people and this country for everything they do for the human rights in the world and for Jews who want to emigrate from Russia to Israel in particular. Thank you very much."

Avital Shcharansky was given the phone. She appeared shy, somewhat embarrassed by the emotional outburst that greeted her husband and herself. She told Reagan only, "I just wanted to say thank you." The President replied, "I wish you mazel tov with all my heart." He promised he would continue his efforts to release other Prisoners of Conscience.

Tumultuous Greetings

The airport's VIP lounge was packed with an overflow crowd, mainly young people, many of them wearing the black hats of ultra-Orthodox Jews or the knitted skullcaps of the religious youth movements and the ultra-nationalist religious Gush Emunim movement.

This crowd cheered lustily when Avital Shcharansky, wearing a scarf over her head as is customary among Orthodox women, placed a blue-and-white skullcap on Anatoly, who arrived in Israel bare-headed and remained bare-headed throughout the official ceremonies.

Again at the Western Wall, religious enthusiasts threw a tallit (prayer shawl) around Shcharansky's shoulders and placed a white knitted skullcap on his

head. Shcharansky kissed the cold stones of the Wall three times and recited psalms. His wife prayed at the Ezrat Nashim, the section reserved for women. There was dancing and singing and the blowing of horns, as if at a Purim celebration. It was only after midnight that Anatoly and Avital were taken to the small flat provided for them by the Immigration Ministry in the Kiryat Moshe quarter of Jerusalem.

A well-wisher called after the couple, "Finally, the end of the road." Avital turned and replied, "No. It is only the beginning."

SPECIAL INTERVIEW FROM MOZAMBIQUE TO MOSCOW By Judith Kohn

WASHINGTON, Feb. 12 (JTA) — Anatoly Shcharansky's walk across the Glienicke Bridge dividing East Germany and West Berlin, marked the final steps in a long path to freedom whose first stretch was paved in Mozambique some eight years ago.

It was then, in 1978, that Ronald Greenwald, a New York rabbi who had been active in the Rockefeller and Nixon political campaigns, arranged the release of an Israeli citizen confined in a Mozambique jail on charges of espionage.

In a telephone interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Greenwald recounted the story from its beginning.

An Earlier Case Recalled

The Israeli, Miron Marcus, had married a woman from South Africa where he took up residence. On a stormy day, as he piloted his father-in-law's private plane, he found himself diverted and forced to land in Mozambiquan territory, where he was picked up, charged with spying and put in solitary confinement.

From this point, one thing seems to have set off another, as Israelis familiar with Greenwald's political connections persuaded him to intercede on behalf of Marcus.

Through his contacts with Wolfgang Vogel, an East German lawyer well connected in the upper strata of Moscow's bureaucracy, Greenwald worked out an arrangement by which Marcus was freed in exchange for a convicted Soviet agent, Robert Thompson, who was jailed in Pennsylvania.

A few years later, Avital Shcharansky, wife of the human rights activist who won his freedom Tuesday after serving eight years of a 13-year sentence on espionage charges, won a commitment from Greenwald to actively pursue her husband's release. Avital Shcharansky had approached him, Greenwald said, after hearing about the Marcus exchange of prisoners which he had helped negotiate.

Since then, Greenwald, who runs his own commodities trading business, as well as a number of Jewish Federation summer camps in upstate New York, has made more than 25 trips to East Germany in an unflagging effort that friends had warned him would bear no fruit.

A Congressman Gets Involved

By the time of the Marcus exchange, another central character had worked himself into the script—Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R. N.Y.). Gilman, too, had been involved in preparing Shcharansky's path to freedom starting with his role in the same 1978 arrangement engineered by Greenwald, a constituent and friend.

Gilman was not in the country this week, but a staff member at his office said that Greenwald was welcome to speak in his name. At a meeting with Vogel in East Berlin last month, it was already clear to Gilman that the Soviets were seriously considering a spy exchange that would include Shcharansky as well.

The Soviet dissident, whose conviction and sentencing in 1978 were widely perceived as an attempt to make an example out of a vocal human rights activist, had consistently maintained his innocence. Two American administrations have also categorically denied that Shcharansky was ever an agent for the U.S.

But the idea of including Shcharansky in a spy swap had been put forward as early as 1980. The four or five "hard proposals" aired over the last six years involved the exchange of some "significant people" jailed as agents for the Soviet Union, according to Greenwald.

The Nelson Mandela Connection

One of these suggestions, proposed to South Africa two years ago, was the release of jailed Black activist Nelson Mandela in return for Moscow's release of Shcharansky. The idea was dropped when the South Africans rejected it out of hand.

With the impending release of Shcharansky last week, South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha said he would free Mandela if Shcharansky as well as a South African imprisoned in Angola were also released. Rumors have since been circulating that freedom for Mandela could come some time soon.

But when the deal was first suggested, Greenwald said, "the time was not right — for whatever reason." By the day of the November summit meeting in Geneva between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, some substantial movement had apparently somehow taken place.

In a meeting in East Berlin just before the Geneva summit, Vogel told Greenwald that if the Reagan-Gorbachev talks went well, there could be "an opportunity for dialogue," clear reference to Shcharansky, Greenwald said, since "my dialogue with him has always been Shcharansky."

Although he was well aware that the President had personally raised the idea of an exchange involving Shcharansky in his talks with Gorbachev, it was not until some eight or nine weeks ago that Greenwald "knew things were getting serious."

With Gilman playing the vital link with the Reagan Administration, the details of a prisoner exchange that included three convicted Soviet agents in West German prisons as well as two in the U.S. were smoothed out, leading to Shcharansky's walk over the Glienicke Bridge on Tuesday.

Further Movement From Moscow Envisioned

While many others appeared to temper their excitement about Shcharansky's release with hints of skepticism as to whether it marks the start of a relaxation of Soviet emigration policy, Greenwald envisioned further movement from Moscow.

"I must say that we have an optimistic view. We think that Gorbachev is a man of some intelligence that understands the Western world, and also understands that one act of symbolism would not satisfy the desires or what we in the free world call 'greater movement on human rights'," said Greenwald.

The question, he added, "is what price do we have to pay?" Greenwald would not rule out the possibility of seeking similar arrangements for other Prisoners of Conscience in the future, although no one Jewish prisoner is likely to provide the sweeping public relations benefit that the release of Shcharansky, persistent symbol of the Soviet Jewry movement, had afforded Moscow. In addition, Shcharansky was the only dissident among imprisoned Jewish activists to be charged with espionage.

In the meantime, Greenwald said, "we're a little bit tired" and need some time -- maybe a week or so -- to decide how to proceed from here.

A trip to Israel for a meeting with the Shcharansky couple might well be the next and most satisfying of the many journeys that have marked Greenwald's lengthy second career in diplomacy.

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM CONTINUES

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Jan. 12 (JTA) -- American Jewish leaders hailed the release of Soviet Jewish aliya activist Anatoly Shcharansky, but they also stressed that the fight on behalf of Soviet Jewry is not over yet and that thousands of Jews are still waiting in the USSR to receive permission to emigrate.

Kenneth Bialkin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, expressed "joy" at Shcharansky's freedom and praised President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz "for their unremitting and ultimately successful efforts to win his release. Their commitment to the cause of Soviet Jewry merits our deepest appreciation."

Noting that such refuseniks as Yosef Begun and Ida Nudel have been waiting for many years for an exit visa, Bialkin said: "We will continue our efforts to call to world attention the consistent violations by the Soviet Union of the solemn commitments which it made in signing the Helsinki accords more than 10 years ago," on the issue of human rights.

Gerald Kraft, president of B'nai B'rith International, declared: "We can only rejoice that Shcharansky's bitter ordeal has finally come to an end and that he can rejoice his remarkably courageous and steadfast wife, Avital." He said, however, that Jews in the USSR "are still denied basic freedom as Jews," and that the Jewish community in the United States "will continue its efforts to help those Soviet Jews who wish to leave to do so."

Others Are Still Denied Freedom

In a joint statement, Howard Friedman, president, and David Gordis, executive vice president, of the American Jewish Committee, said: "At the same time that we rejoice in Shcharansky's freedom, we are ever mindful of the tens of thousands of other Soviet Jews who remain behind, denied the opportunity for an exit visa. We reaffirm our pledge to continue our efforts until they, too, are able to establish new lives in Israel and be reunited with their families."

Abraham Foxman, associate national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, said he welcomed Shcharansky's release but added that there cannot be full rejoicing "while hundreds of thousands of other Soviet Jews continue to suffer--unable to live as Jews in the Soviet Union, unable to leave."

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, stated: "The release of Shcharansky confirms once again that the Soviet Union cannot forever resist the force of world opinion. It reminds us too that, blessed as we are with freedom to think and speak and act, American Jews must never forget or abandon their brothers and sisters, who, because they wish to live as Jews and join their families in Israel, have been persecuted and imprisoned by Soviet authorities."

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry said: "We are extremely grateful to this Administration for the continuing public and private efforts in helping secure Shcharansky's freedom and having him repatriated to Israel to join his wife, Avital."

It added: "We trust that the release of Anatoly Shcharansky indicates a change in Soviet behavior, as it seeks to build a new relationship with this country. In so doing, we look forward to the release of hundreds of thousands of other Jews waiting to leave, some for more than 15 years."

Bernice Tannenbaum, chairman of the American Section of the World Zionist Organization, said: "Soviet propaganda attempted unsuccessfully to camouflage Shcharansky's imprisonment for Zionist and humanist activities, as a defender of human rights, and the Helsinki accords, with the canard of espionage. It is so fitting, so right, so inspiring that he has already arrived in the State that welcomes him while it continues to burn a lamp of hope for his fellow Soviet Jews."

The Struggle Must Continue

Chaim Aron, head of the department of immigration and absorption of the Jewish Agency, said: "While we celebrate the release of Shcharansky let us not fall into the trap of forgetting the other Prisoners of Zion and the 400,000 Jews who have applied to leave the Soviet Union. We must continue the struggle to free Soviet Jewry and we must be careful not to view Shcharansky's release as a change in Soviet policy, a change which unfortunately has not yet been accomplished."

Alan Pesky, chairman of the Coalition to Free Soviet Jews, said that the "momentous event" of Shcharansky's release "does not mean the end of our struggle to ease the plight of two and a half million Soviet Jews." He said his organization welcomed the release, "especially in view of the Soviets' unwillingness for many years to even consider the notion of his departure."

Pesky added: "The Soviet Union must understand, however, that the freeing of Shcharansky, or for that matter a handful of other prominent Jewish activists, while appreciated among those who cherish liberty, will only have a lasting impact if it is followed by a large-scale emigration of Soviet Jews."

American Jewish Congress president Theodore Mann said Shcharansky's release is "an encouraging and significant event," but the degree to which it "reflects a real change in Soviet policy" remains uncertain. To the extent that the Shcharansky action does signal a new openness on the part of the Soviet Union, Mann said, "it holds the promise of a new phase in American-Soviet relations."

Rabbi Louis Bernstein, president of the Rabbinical Council of America, said that Shcharansky's release was a tribute to the greatness of the American people and its President. "It is a victory of the indomitable spirit of a human being created in the image of God over the forces of evil and darkness," he stated. Bern-

stein expressed the hope that the release will signal hope for the release of other Prisoners of Conscience who wish to leave the Soviet Union and that the USSR will open up its doors to all Jews who wish to emigrate.

Ruth Popkin, president of Hadassah, welcomed the release of Shcharansky, stating that he "has been a symbol of courage and determination for the cause of Soviet Jewry and to all who cherish freedom. We hope that his release will herald the opening of the doors of emigration to the many Prisoners of Conscience and the thousands of other Soviet Jews whose only crime is the wish to rejoin their families and live as free Jews in the Jewish State, Israel."

Other Jewish leaders who welcomed Shcharansky's release and stressed that the struggle must continue on behalf of other Soviet Jews who wish to emigrate were: Rabbi William Berkowitz, president, American Jewish Heritage Foundation; Herbert Magidson, president, Jewish Labor Committee; Ernest Zelig, president, Bnai Zion; Dr. Barnett Zumoff, president, Workmen's Circle; and Hart Hasen, president, Herut Zionists of America.

Some 300 members of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry sang and danced in a "victory celebration" at Stern College in Manhattan around a wooden prison cage which Avital Shcharansky often stood in during SSSJ demonstrations for her husband.

Rabbi Allan Meyerowitz of Spring Valley, N.Y., who met Anatoly Shcharansky in 1974, recalled that Shcharansky had encouraged him to sing the Israeli anthem, Hatikvah, with him in Red Square. Israel Fridman of Manhattan, who had been at the courthouse in Moscow during Shcharansky's trial, emphasized that "many Soviet Jews are still left in hell as Shcharansky reaches his seventh heaven."

NAZI WAR CRIMINAL EXTRADITED

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, Feb. 12 (JTA) — After more than 30 years, numerous legal proceedings and two formal extradition requests, accused war criminal Andrija Artukovic boarded a plane early Wednesday morning bound for Yugoslavia where he will face charges stemming from his activities as a senior official of the Nazi puppet state of Croatia during World War II.

Artukovic departed from Kennedy International Airport at approximately 12:30 a.m. after Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist, without comment, refused to block his extradition. The Tanjug News Agency, the official Yugoslav news agency in Belgrade, reported that Artukovic had arrived. The news agency said "Artukovic was today transferred to Yugoslavia and turned over to court authorities."

In Washington, the State Department said the accused war criminal was surrendered to Yugoslav authorities who returned him to Zagreb in northern Yugoslavia for trial on murder charges. A surrender warrant was signed June 3, 1985 by Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead, the Department said.

Two Jewish organizations who have closely monitored the legal proceedings involving Artukovic — the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center and the World Jewish Congress — immediately expressed their gratitude to the Justice and State Departments for their persistent efforts leading to Artukovic's extradition.

The 86-year-old Artukovic, of Seal Beach, a seaside community south of Los Angeles, is accused

by the Justice Department of the wartime persecution or murder of 700,000 Serbians, 40,000 gypsies and 28,000 Jews while he was Interior Minister of Croatia. Suffering from various physical and health related ailments, Artukovic had been confined to the detention facilities at the University of South California Medical Center since his arrest in November, 1984, on the second of two extradition requests from Yugoslavia.

Artukovic has lived in California since entering the U.S. in 1948 through the use of fraudulent documents, according to the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations. His deportation was ordered in 1952, at the same time Yugoslav officials were requesting his extradition for trial on 22 counts of murder stemming from alleged war crimes.

Artukovic has always emphatically denied the charges, and in 1959, a U.S. district court turned down the extradition request, holding that there was insufficient evidence of guilt. That same year, the deportation order was stayed by an immigration commissioner on the grounds that Artukovic would be persecuted if he returned to his native land.

In 1978, Congress amended the Immigration Act to provide that such stays could not be granted to members of wartime German governments who are accused of atrocities. U.S. immigration authorities then renewed their efforts to have Artukovic deported, and the 1959 stay was ordered revoked.

Artukovic appealed, and in December, 1982, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in Los Angeles ruled that before the stay could be lifted, the government would have to prove its case, thus providing a significant setback to prosecutors in the case. To avoid a drawn-out deportation battle, U.S. officials reportedly encouraged the Yugoslavs to file a new extradition request.

On November 14, 1984, Artukovic was arrested by U.S. Marshals and local police on a new extradition request. Among the charges brought by the Yugoslav government against him are that he commanded the extermination of thousands of persons, including the entire population of several villages in early 1942.

Just last week, an appeal by Artukovic against extradition was denied by U.S. District Court Chief Judge Manuel Real. Artukovic had ten days to file an appeal on Real's ruling. Last Tuesday, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in Los Angeles denied a stay of extradition. That action was soon followed by the Supreme Court action. By that time, Artukovic was already on a plane from Los Angeles to New York.

IVORY COAST RESUMES TIES WITH ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Feb. 12 (JTA) — Israel and Ivory Coast announced the resumption of full diplomatic relations Wednesday in joint statements released simultaneously here and in Abidjan, the Ivorian capital. Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir said an Israeli Ambassador will take up his post in the West African nation shortly.

An Ambassador from Ivory Coast will soon establish an Embassy in Tel Aviv. The country had its Embassy in Jerusalem before it broke relations with Israel in 1973 in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War, and still owns the building there.

The two countries agreed in principle to restore relations during a meeting last December between Premier Shimon Peres and President Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory Coast. The meeting, in Geneva, had not been announced in advance.

A first set of fund-raising dinners was held in October. Mr. Edwards said the commission received \$795,000 in pledges of money that will come in over the next three years. But during the months of waiting, ACTS officials had borrowed \$3.3 million in bank loans at relatively high, short-term rates. Mr. Edwards said those loans will be included in the debt restructuring.

The debt restructuring and newly raised funds should improve ACTS' financial picture, Mr. Edwards said. He calls the 1986 budget of \$8.1 million "achievable."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

02-14-86

2593

Psalms sustained Shcharansky in prison, delayed his release

By Religious News Service

NEW YORK (RNS) — A book of Psalms got Anatoly B. Shcharansky in trouble in prison and delayed his release in an East-West prisoner exchange.

In a Feb. 12 interview on Israeli television, the first he gave after being released from a Soviet labor camp, the Jewish activist said the book of Psalms had cost him 130 days in solitary confinement when he refused to let guards confiscate it.

Just before he was released from the labor camp on Feb. 11, he said, he was once again pressed to give up the book of Psalms and once again refused.

"I said I would not leave the country without the Psalms, which helped me so much," he related, speaking in Hebrew. "I lay down in the snow and said, 'Not another step.'"

Mr. Shcharansky said that after the guards examined the book's binding, they returned it to him.

The 38-year-old computer programmer was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment for treason in 1978. He had applied to emigrate to Israel in 1973 but was refused permission. Later, he became active in the human-rights movement in the Soviet Union and was accused of spying for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, a charge that was denied by then-President Jimmy Carter.

Asked about his religious beliefs, Mr. Shcharansky said, "I am a Jew. Our religion is not only part of our culture. Without religion I could not have withstood all that I suffered."

He said that although his wife, Avital, was writing to him twice a week, he "got only two letters a year in a good year. There were also bad years, when I received no letters at all."

On Feb. 13, Mr. Shcharansky answered questions from a group of reporters at a 90-minute press conference in Jerusalem. Asked if he had been tortured in prison, he said, "Well, if you mean by the word 'torture,' beating, physical, no, I wasn't. But there is torture by punishment cells, and that is torture by hunger and by cold."

He said he had steadily refused to cooperate with his captors in any way during his imprisonment. "My release without making any concessions proves our struggle can really be successful, despite all the pessimism we hear," Mr. Shcharansky affirmed.

On Feb. 12, the U.S. State Department said the Soviet Union had "indicated" that Mr. Shcharansky's mother, Ida P. Milgrom, and his older brother, Leonid, would be permitted to follow him to Israel. His wife, Avital, was forced to emigrate the day after they were married in 1974.

DOMESTIC NEWS

02-11-86/2560

With Photo No. PCJ59544

Jewish leaders hail Shcharansky release; seek continued pressure

By Religious News Service

NEW YORK (RNS) — While welcoming the release of Anatoly B. Shcharansky in an East-West prisoner exchange, American Jewish leaders urged that pressure be continued on the Soviet Union to release other political prisoners and to permit thousands of other Jews to emigrate.

Mr. Shcharansky, 37, became a major symbol of the plight of Soviet Jews when he was sentenced in 1978 to 13 years in prison and labor camp on charges of spying for the United States. He had been a computer programmer at the Moscow Research Institute for Oil and Gas when he first applied for permission to emigrate to Israel in 1973. He was turned down on the ground that he was in possession of classified information.

His wife, Avital, was forced by Soviet authorities to leave for Israel just one day after their marriage on July 4, 1974. The following year Mr. Shcharansky was dismissed from the Research Institute and began teaching individuals. He also became an active participant in cultural symposiums and press conferences organized by other Soviet Jewish refuseniks (people refused permission to emigrate).

When he was convicted of espionage in 1978 following a closed trial, Mr. Shcharansky became the only major dissident convicted on such a charge since the Stalinist era. President Jimmy Carter denied that the dissident had had any connection with U.S. intelligence — a departure from the usual U.S. policy of refusing to confirm or deny that individuals are spies.

Mr. Shcharansky and three Germans accused of spying for the West were exchanged for five Warsaw Pact intelligence agents in a Feb. 11 ceremony at West Berlin's Glienicke Bridge, which has been the scene of most East-West prisoner exchanges. He was reunited with his wife in Frankfurt and they prepared to depart for Israel.

"If the departure of Mr. Shcharansky signals a rethinking of the Soviet position on human rights, such a development would be warmly welcomed by all Americans," said Kenneth J. Bialkin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. He added that "until then, we will continue our efforts to call to world attention the consistent violations by the Soviet Union of the solemn commitments which it made in signing the Helsinki accords more than 10 years ago."

Howard I. Friedman, president of the American Jewish Committee, and Dr. David M. Gordis, executive vice-president, said: "At the same time that we rejoice in Shcharansky's freedom, we are ever mindful of the tens of thousands of other Soviet Jews who remain behind, denied the opportunity for exit visas. We reaffirm our pledge to continue our efforts until they, too, are able to establish new lives in Israel and be reunited with their families."

Abraham H. Foxman, associate national director of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith, said there cannot be full rejoicing at the release of Mr. Shcharansky "while hundreds of thousands of other Soviet Jews continue to suffer — unable to live as Jews in the Soviet Union, unable to leave." He said that General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev "can demonstrate seriousness about pursuing a new course for his government by making Mr. Shcharansky's release the beginning of a large flow of Jews from the Soviet Union."

Morris Abram, president of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, cautioned that "the Soviets can manufacture ten new prisoners for every one they let go. The fundamental issue is and will remain the anti-Semitic posture of the Soviet Union and the anti-human rights posture which prevents them from abiding by the Helsinki accords."



Hoisted shoulder-high by a throng of well-wishers, the newly freed dissident is carried toward the sacred Western Wall in the Old City

ISAAC HARARI

EAST-WEST

This Year in Jerusalem

At last, Shcharansky is released to Israel and freedom

*How good it is and how pleasant
for brothers to live together!
... It is like the dew of Hermon falling
upon the hills of Zion.
There the Lord bestows his blessing,
life for evermore.*

—From Psalm 133, Shcharansky's favorite

The psalmbook kept him company. During the nine years he spent in Soviet prisons and work camps, most of his other possessions were taken from him. But he clung to a miniature copy of the *Book of Psalms* that his wife Avital had sent from Israel. In fact, he once spent 130 days in solitary confinement because he refused to allow the authorities to confiscate the book. Early last week his Soviet guards tried again to seize it. In desperate fury, the prisoner defied his captors by throwing himself into the snow. "I said I would not leave without the Psalms that had helped me so much," he later explained. "I lay down in the snow and said, 'Not another step.' " The guards scrutinized the book carefully, then handed it back. The elaborately negotiated release of Anatoli Shcharansky, one of the Soviet Union's most famous po-

litical prisoners and a symbol of the plight of Soviet Jews and human rights dissidents alike, proceeded as planned.

"Words are too poor to express this moment," the Prime Minister of Israel, Shimon Peres, declared the next night as Shcharansky arrived in Tel Aviv from Frankfurt aboard an Israeli executive jet. "Welcome, and may you be happy among us." Standing beside his darkly beautiful wife, with whom he had been reunited only a few hours earlier after an absence of twelve years, Shcharansky, 38, told the crowd of well-wishers in halting Hebrew, "There are moments in our life that are difficult to describe. This is the happiest day in our lives." His eyes glistening in the glare of TV lights, he continued, "Twelve years ago I said to Avital on our parting, 'I'll see you soon in Jerusalem.' But my way here became as long and as hard as the Galuth [the biblical exile of the Jews from Israel] because in these years the Pharaohs of our time decided to announce a new conspiracy of Jews, from Russia and other countries, against the regime. I know how strong was the hatred of the KGB, and how strong their determination not to allow this day to come. The very fact that it did come is

a strong indication of the justness of our cause."

Waiting along with Peres to welcome Shcharansky at Ben Gurion Airport were a number of Cabinet ministers and politicians, together with the country's two Chief Rabbis. As the plane came to a halt and the door opened, a tall man carrying a shopping bag stepped inside. It was Mikhail Stiglitz, Avital's brother, who is an Israeli army officer. The pilot had radioed ahead that Shcharansky, who was released from the labor camp in a threadbare suit of clothes, badly needed a pair of pants and a belt to hold them up. While the crowd waited, Shcharansky changed into a pair of gray trousers brought by his brother-in-law, then stepped out onto the tarmac.

As officials came forward to shake the famous dissident's hand, the Interior Minister, Rabbi Itzhak Peretz, offered a prayer: "Blessed be thou, O Lord, who resurrects the dead." The man who in the 1970s had become a powerful voice of dissent in the Soviet Union and a bridge between Soviet Jewry and the rest of the human rights movement, stood for a moment holding his wife's hand, as if savoring his liberation for the first time. Then, smiling broadly, he



CARL MOYANS

Still waiting in the wings: supporters of the 1 million-member leftist coalition known as Bayan demonstrate in the capital

struggle to occupy Malacañang Palace.

Last week she spent much of her time huddling with aides and planning strategy. Aquino and her closest advisers realized very early that they had been outmaneuvered by Marcos in the questionable election balloting. On Tuesday, the day that President Reagan gave his news conference, a group of pro-opposition legislators told top Aquino campaign officials there was no way to stop Marcos from steamrolling to victory in the National Assembly tallies. Reason: he has complete political control in two important areas of the northern island of Luzon plus the central Visayan islands. In all those regions, he would be able to pad voting results with impunity, thus overcoming any Aquino lead at the polls elsewhere.

The Aquino camp was badly shaken on Tuesday when Javier, the campaign director of Antique province, was brutally and publicly murdered by men with alleged ties to a prominent leader of the Marcos forces in the National Assembly (see box). Late last week the bodies of ten more people, all said to be opposition supporters, were reportedly discovered in northerly Quirino province. At least 156 people have been killed in election-related violence since the presidential campaign began.

That grim figure was above average even for the Philippines, where violence is a traditional fellow traveler of politics. In 1961, for example, before Marcos appeared on the presidential scene, 35 people were killed during an election campaign; that is still considered a postwar low. In 1984, during National Assembly elections, more than 100 fatalities were reported.

Aquino last week was watching Washington for important political signals. She was badly stung by President Reagan's offhand reference to opposition

fraud during the election. She responded immediately with a press statement that coolly noted the appointment of Envoy Habib but observed that on his last White House assignment before retirement in 1983, Habib had failed to end civil strife in Lebanon. Said Aquino: "I hope neither Mr. Reagan nor Mr. Marcos is expecting to see our beloved country go the same way." Claiming that she had been cheated out of as much as 25% of the national vote, she declared that it would be folly for her supporters to "settle down to a Western-style opposition role."

After Reagan's press-conference remarks, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Bosworth arranged a meeting with Aquino to discuss Special Envoy Habib's impending visit. The atmosphere during the session was both awkward and frigid. Bosworth, a highly regarded career diplomat who has worked hard to gain the opposition's confidence, had apparently been taken by surprise by the President's remarks. Says a key Aquino supporter who walked in on the Bosworth-Aquino meeting: "I don't know what the Japanese Ambassador looked like when they were bombing Pearl Harbor, but I imagine he looked like Steve."

Any pessimism that Aquino may have been feeling about the future, however, did not impede her actions. Before the memorial service for Javier, she paid a luncheon call on the country's 104-member Bishops' Conference to lobby for support for her People's Victory campaign and to assure the bishops of her commitment to nonviolence. Shortly afterward she went public with her Victory plans.

A key factor in Aquino's decision to go forward quickly with a civil-disobedience campaign was the fear that her moderate forces would soon be overtaken by pro-Communist groups eager to exploit the popular frustration at Marcos' formal

election victory. As she planned her forthcoming rallies, Aquino continued to act forcefully to keep radical leftists from climbing aboard her campaign. One would-be partner: the 1 million-member leftist coalition known as Bayan, whose leadership is widely believed to have links to the Communist New People's Army. Aquino has every reason to be leery of newfound leftist allies. Throughout the campaign, she was repeatedly forced to rebut Marcos' accusations that she was little more than a stalking horse for the Communists.

Aquino's closest supporters are aware that leftist forces are still waiting in the wings. Says an Aquino campaign troubleshooter: "The biggest problem we have is that if Cory does not act, the moderates will be put out of business." On the other hand, he added, "if Cory acts, it will place this country on the brink of revolution."

Aquino's continuing resistance to Marcos' victory is nothing more than a calculated gamble that may yet provoke incalculable upheaval. Says Ramon Mitra, a National Assemblyman and an Aquino adviser: "We don't know whether we will be able to keep control over this. But we thought we would take the risk. We have to send a message to our friends that we are not taking this sitting down."

That stark problem was clearly in the minds of President Reagan's White House advisers when they drafted his weekend statement. It was impossible to deny that, as Reagan noted, the people of the Philippines are "at a major crossroads in their history. There are no easy answers. And in the last analysis, they will have to find the solutions themselves." One way or another, Aquino and Marcos will soon determine that solution.

—By George Russell. Reported by Sandra Burton and Barry Hillenbrand/Manila and Alessandra Stanley/Washington

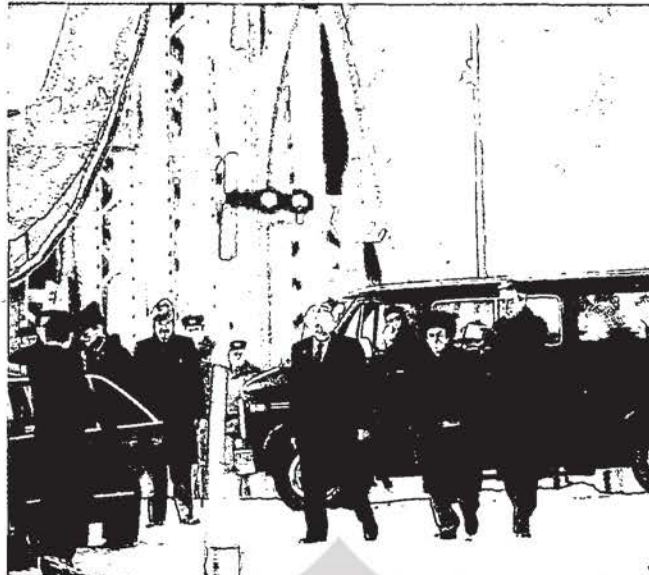
acknowledged with a wave of his hand the shouts of "Tolya! Tolya!" the Russian diminutive of Anatoli.

Before his release that morning in Berlin, in an elaborately negotiated prisoner exchange, there was concern that the years of imprisonment might have aggravated his heart condition. It was known that he weighed 165 lbs. at the time of his imprisonment in 1977 and as little as 81 lbs. during a 100-day hunger strike last year. But an Israeli doctor, rushed to Frankfurt to examine Shcharansky, pronounced him fit to undertake the flight to Israel. As it turned out, the Soviet authorities not only force-fed him during the latter part of his hunger strike but during the past two months greatly increased his daily food ration, enabling him to gain 22 lbs.

"It's an old Soviet custom," he quipped. "When they produce goods for export, they put them in good covering." The balding Shcharansky, who is 5 ft. 2 in., looked slight but not underweight, pale but not ill, and very much in command of the situation. A subsequent physical examination revealed that he was suffering from a slight-heart defect and a hand tremor. His doctors recommended rest and light exercise.

In the airport lounge Shcharansky received a telephone call from Ronald Reagan. In English, which he speaks well but with a pronounced accent, Shcharansky told the President, "First of all, I know how great was your role in this greatest event of my and my wife's life—the fact that I could join my people today in Israel. Second, as you know very well, I was never an American spy. But I had wide contacts with many American politicians, journalists, lawyers and other public figures . . . and that's why I know very well how deep is the concern of all of your people in the problem of human rights all over the world." The President assured the Shcharanskys that he would continue to press for the release of more Soviet Jews. He added, "I wish you *mazel tov* [congratulations] with all my heart."

In the welcoming speeches, Peres noted that Shcharansky was adopting a new Hebrew first name, *Natan*, which means "the gift." Peres said the Russian had "fought heroically alone as a proud Jew, as a man with a mission." As for Avital, who worked ceaselessly for her husband's release, Peres declared, "Avital fought like a lioness. No place was too far away for her; no person was a stranger to her; no opportunity was too small for her. No declaration ever depressed her." Shcharansky smiled as he recognized several other Soviet activists from the old days. "I'm very glad," he joked, "to speak to an audience in which my criminal contacts are so widely represented." Turning serious, he vowed, "On this happiest day



Walk to liberty: crossing the Glenicker Bridge with Western officials
Except on rare occasions, it is a span that leads to nowhere.

of our lives, I am not going to forget those whom I left in the camps, in the prisons, who are still in exile or who still continue their struggle for their right to emigrate, for their human rights."

During his first hours in Jerusalem, Shcharansky was driven to the Old City and hoisted on the shoulders of a group of well-wishers. Suddenly the group was surrounded by a crowd of Orthodox men, bearded and wearing black suits, protesting against the Mormons, who are building a branch of Brigham Young University on the Mount of Olives. The demonstrators raised a banner addressed to him: SPEAK UP FOR THE RELIGION THAT YOU SACRIFICED YOURSELF FOR. Shcharansky looked troubled as he proceeded to pray at the sacred Western Wall of the Old City. He did not appear eager to become embroiled in a religious

or political controversy. When asked later to comment on the fact that any Israeli political party would be pleased to have him as a spokesman, Shcharansky parried the question, saying the Soviet Union was not a good place to learn about political parties since it had only one, "and the one party I would not work for is the Communist Party."

On Wednesday he made preliminary efforts to arrange for the immigration to Israel of his mother *Ida Milgrom*, 77, and his brother *Leonid*, 39, a request that Soviet authorities have implied would be fulfilled within a few weeks. Even though she was not able to see her younger son before his sudden departure, *Ida Milgrom*, who like her daughter-in-law had fought hard for Anatoli's release, was overwhelmed by the good news. Leonid was at her side. "We'll be celebrating with champagne and vodka tonight, even though they aren't so easy to find anymore," he said, referring to the government's current antialcohol campaign. A friend chimed in, "You should consider yourself lucky if champagne and vodka are your only worries."

In Israel as the week passed, Anatoli Shcharansky tried as best he could to spend some private time with the wife from whom he had been separated for so many years. As for the future, it was too early to make plans, he said. Because he has fallen far behind in his chosen field, mathematics and computer technology, he acknowledged that it would be "something of a problem" to return to his old line of work. But nobody who knew the brave, resourceful and clever young man



Journey's end: Avital and Anatoli confer at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport

"Now the dream has lasted three days . . . I am still afraid I will wake up."

of conscience in Moscow in former times doubted that he would find ways to fulfill his dreams.

Anatoli Shcharansky's happiest day began 2,000 miles away as a dusting of snow glistened on the stone centaurs that guard the western end of Berlin's Glienicke Bridge, where a boldly lettered sign warns passersby, YOU ARE LEAVING THE AMERICAN SECTOR. On the eastern side of the 420-ft. crossing, the Soviet hammer-and-sickle flag and the black-red-and-gold banner of the German Democratic Republic flapped in the chill breeze off the ice-clogged Havel River. Most of the time the iron span in the forested Wannsee district of southwestern Berlin is a bridge leading nowhere, unused except for the occasional official vehicle.

It was here, on Feb. 10, 1962, that the downed American U-2 pilot, Francis Gary Powers, walked past Soviet Superspy Rudolf Abel while heading west across the bridge. In June 1985, 25 Western agents were traded here for four East bloc spies imprisoned in the U.S. Ever since rumors began circulating early this month that Shcharansky might soon be included in such a prisoner exchange, it was assumed that the famed Soviet dissident would take the same route to the West. But there were endless snags. Among the most controversial: even though Shcharansky was convicted in the Soviet Union on



The new immigrant with Prime Minister Shimon Peres

Welcome to a brave man, congratulations to a "lioness."

trumped-up charges of engaging in espionage for the U.S., should he be part of an exchange that involved eight other people, including several convicted spies?

With some deft behind-the-scenes bargaining, most of the problems were settled by early last week. Unresolved until the event actually took place was U.S. and

West German determination that the release of Shcharansky be physically separated, by at least a short interval, from the spy exchange at the bridge. At a few minutes before 11 last Tuesday morning, the diminutive figure in fur hat and baggy clothing emerged from behind two vans parked at the middle of the bridge. "No Wall!" Shcharansky shouted to bystanders with a smile as he strode across the 4-in.-wide line at the center of the span that marks the barrier between East and West. Then he asked, "When will I see my wife?" Replied one of the Americans: "If all goes well, you'll have a pleasant surprise in Frankfurt."

That Shcharansky had at last been freed, as a reflection of slightly improving relations between Moscow and Washington, was due in large part to the unrelenting efforts of his wife Avital. The Shcharanskys had been separated since the day after their 1974 wedding, when Avital emigrated from the Soviet Union to Israel, convinced that Anatoli would be permitted to follow within a few months. After his conviction in 1978, she devoted

her life to securing his release. Jimmy Carter pursued the case, and so did Ronald Reagan, who discussed it with Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev at the Geneva summit meeting last November.

Another Soviet dissident, Nobel Peace Laureate Andrei Sakharov, restricted since 1980 to the closed city of

Visit with a Survivor

The small, borrowed apartment in Jerusalem where Anatoli and Avital Shcharansky are staying bears a striking resemblance to the cluttered flats in the Soviet Union where dissidents once congregated. Folders of correspondence and masses of newspaper clippings lie scattered about—some of the detritus of Avital's ceaseless nine-year campaign to rouse world opinion on her husband's behalf. Gifts and congratulatory messages are displayed on every available surface: a silver kiddush cup from a Jewish congregation in New York, a crayon drawing by a child that shows a flourishing green tree and Israeli flag. Floating on the ceiling are big, colorful balloons, some heart shaped, one bearing the inscription in English and Hebrew, WELCOME HOME. In this cheerful new setting, Shcharansky agreed to talk with TIME Associate Editor Patricia Blake. Her report:

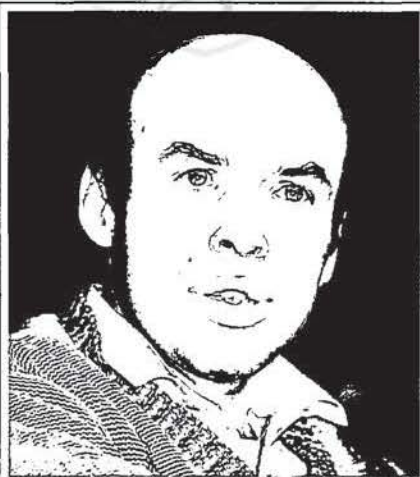
Tolya, as his friends call him, comes into the room with his characteristically bouncy gait. A diminutive man, Shcharansky is dwarfed by the strapping sabras who are with him in the apartment to keep the press at bay. "To be so small is a great advantage in camp," he

jokes. "The prison clothes you get are always much too large." He flaps his arms and kicks out his feet in mock illustration of how the sleeves and trouser legs flopped over. "When you are put in a freezing-cold punishment cell, as I was for a total of 430 days, the extra material helps a little to keep you warm."

In all, Shcharansky spent 3,255 days in the Gulag, the extensive Soviet penal system, almost completely cut off from external contacts. He had only the faintest sense of his international celebrity. "The method the KGB uses against prisoners is

to isolate them fully from the outside world," he explains. What is so terrible about this isolation, he believes, is that it often leads a man to begin compromising himself morally "because he has been cut off" from the system of values he ordinarily lives by.

Shcharansky says he was determined not to let this happen and spent long hours trying to keep his moral balance. He remembers creating the kind of unity among prisoners that he once strived for among Soviet dissidents. "The Soviet authorities hate any kind of solidarity among independent-minded people," he says. "In prison this becomes even clearer than it is in ordinary life. Prisoners are forbidden to write collective letters of protest. You are punished if you write to the authorities on behalf of another prisoner—say a sick man who is not getting



The survivor: 3,255 days in the Gulag

Gorky, is at least as well known as Shcharansky. But the Soviets have always claimed that Sakharov, a physicist who once worked on the Soviet nuclear-bomb project, could never be released. As recently as two weeks ago, Gorbachev said flatly in an interview with the French Communist newspaper *L'Humanité* that Sakharov "is still considered to be in possession of state secrets and cannot leave the U.S.S.R." Whether the Soviet position is valid or not, the Kremlin seems determined to stick to it.

The case of Shcharansky, a 1970s activist who often met with American journalists and other Western visitors but had neither scientific nor intelligence information at his disposal, proved to be more negotiable. On Jan. 10, when two U.S. Congressmen, Benjamin Gilman of New York and Tom Lantos of California, visited East Berlin and expressed concern about Shcharansky to East German Lawyer Wolfgang Vogel, who had played a crucial role in previous exchanges, Vogel surprised the Americans by telling them he had been given a "mandate" by the Soviet and East German governments to arrange the release.

Shcharansky felt for almost two months that something was about to happen. On Dec. 26 he was moved, without explanation, to the camp hospital, where he was given vitamin injections and medicine for his heart. Once before, in



A beaming Ida Milgrom, with Elder Son Leonid, in Moscow Champagne, vodka, and perhaps a chance to follow.

1984, he was transferred to the same hospital, provided with proper medical treatment, strengthened with a good diet, and then taken to visit his mother and brother. Again this time, as he gained weight from a diet that included meat and even butter, he assumed that he was being fattened up for another visit.

But last Monday morning, as he was reading from the work of the German author Friedrich Schiller, Shcharansky was told to take off his prison uniform and don civilian clothing. Escorted by four KGB agents, he was then flown to a Moscow airport and put aboard another plane, which took off immediately. "Judging from the sun," he said later, "I concluded that we were flying toward the west. I was pleased because it seemed I was leaving the Soviet Union." When he asked the KGB agents where they were heading, one replied that he was authorized to say Shcharansky was being deprived of his Soviet citizenship because of his "bad behavior" and was being handed over to the U.S. as an American spy. In reply, Shcharansky said he was glad that, 13 years after he had made known his wish to give up his citizenship and leave the Soviet Union, the authorities were granting his request.

As he left the Soviet plane in East Germany, the KGB agents merely pointed him toward a waiting limousine and told him to go to it. Once Shcharansky was inside, a German security man told him he was in East Berlin. "For every Jew, the word Berlin evokes mixed feelings," said Shcharansky. "But for me, at this time, it is the most wonderful place." The next morning he was driven to the Glienicke Bridge, together with the three West German spies who were to be exchanged along

any medical attention. The authorities say, 'Look, your letters don't help.' And they are right logically. But there exists another, inner logic: the prisoner who writes such a letter may not save his neighbor in the next cell, but he saves his soul."

Such acts as writing protest letters were a crucial element in his struggle for survival. Another was his reading of Psalms, which he recited from memory in the punishment cells, where all books were forbidden. While there he had no opportunity to lie down during the day, and at night a wood-and-metal board was put in his cell for sleeping. "Of course, there are no blankets and no warm clothes," he says. The menu: black bread one day, followed by a day of "very poor" hot food. "This went on for 30 and sometimes 40 consecutive days." While in isolation, he found chess a distraction. "I spent a lot of time analyzing chess positions. Of course, I can play the game in my head without a board. That really helped me keep in psychological control."

During those long months, Shcharansky relates, he inevitably turned inward, and his sense of his own Jewishness grew. "Before my arrest . . . I was an assimilated Jew, as practically all Jews are in the Soviet Union. But I gradually came to realize that my denial of my national identity as a Jew was a self-deception."

Shcharansky's compassion for other persecuted ethnic and religious groups in the Soviet Union is strong. He shared cells during his years in prison with Russian Orthodox believers, Lithuanian, Estonian and Ukrainian nationalists. Since he has been in the West, he has already begun to speak out for the rights of various persecuted peoples.

"I am first of all concerned with the people who belong to the same Jewish movement I do," he says. "At the same time, I

cannot forget the prisoners with whom I spent so many hard years and who continue suffering. It's my obligation now to remind people in the West of the fate of people like Andrei Sakharov."

Still, Shcharansky insists that there is a distinction between him and other Soviet dissidents. "My desire has always been to leave the Soviet Union, not to change it. How to reform that country is a problem for people who want to stay there. Even when I was part of the Helsinki Watch group, I never signed documents recommending changes in the system, but I signed a lot of appeals on behalf of individual people."

Shcharansky is uncertain whether his release will prefigure a wider opening of the Soviet gates for other Jews. But he expresses pride in the courage and enduring will of those wishing to leave. "In spite of all attempts to repress the movement for Jewish emigration, there are still people who openly declare their religious affiliation. Even in the cruel camps there are people who remain true to their beliefs in word and in practice."

As he sees it, one man's act of courage inspires another, and that person's inspires a third, forming a chain of ethical defiance. "When I was put on trial after months of complete isolation, I was inspired by the behavior of people who had gone through the same experience and remained the way they were before. They hadn't given in or given up, and that gave me hope." He adds: "I also gained strength from the pages of our Jewish history." Shcharansky cites Judah Maccabee, leader of an Israelite band that revolted and threw off the yoke of Syrian oppressors in the 2nd century B.C. Says he: "The fact that there is a history of resistance always helps."

with him. Two and a half hours later, he was reunited with a tearful Avital in Frankfurt.

Almost unanimously, the friends of Anatoli Shcharansky, while rejoicing at his release, agreed that it did not mean the Soviet Union had changed its attitude toward dissidents. "I am overjoyed that Tolya is a free man, after so many years of suffering," said Naum Meiman, 74, a retired mathematician in Moscow. Like Shcharansky, Meiman was an early member of the Moscow branch of the Helsinki Watch Group, whose aim was to monitor Soviet compliance with the 1975

Helsinki human rights agreement. Adds Meiman: "But his release is not a victory for us because we are now further away from reaching the goals Tolya fought for than when we struggled together." Similarly, Soviet Exile Lev Kopelev, 73, who now lives in West Germany, describes Moscow's release of Shcharansky as "a diversionary tactic," rather than a harbinger of a more liberal human rights policy. Of the eleven founding members of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, which was disbanded in 1982, only two, including Meiman, have managed to avoid either prison or exile.

Nor has the status of Soviet Jews improved. At present there are in the Soviet Union between 10,000 and 15,000 "refuseniks"—Jews who have applied for permission to immigrate to Israel and have been refused. The refuseniks live on the edge of society, many of them deprived of their former positions and forced to take menial jobs while hoping that their luck will change. A vastly larger number, estimated by some observers at 400,000 out of a Soviet Jewish population of about 2½ million, have taken a tentative first step toward making an ap-



■ Unpublished photograph of Sakharov and Bonner in Gorky last October

plication to leave, and many more would doubtless do so if they thought they had a chance of succeeding. Last year only 1,140 Soviet Jews were permitted to leave, as compared with 51,320 in the peak year of 1979. So far this year just 79 have been given exit visas, indicating that there has been no significant change in emigration policy. Emigration for most other Soviet citizens is virtually impossible.

Despite Gorbachev's denials, many dissidents remain in prisons or work camps. Perhaps the most famous, after Sakharov, is Physicist Yuri Orlov, 61, leader of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, who was found guilty in 1978 of "slandering" the Soviet state. Others, many of them Helsinki Watch alumni, include Ivan Kovalyev, his wife Tatyana Osipova, and a Russian Orthodox priest, Gleb Yakunin. Anatoli Koryagin, who became a prominent figure in the controversy over Soviet abuse of psychiatry because of his refusal to diagnose several activists as insane, is in a labor camp. Iosif Begun, a Hebrew teacher and Jewish activist, was sentenced in 1982 to seven years in a labor camp and five in exile. Anatoli Marchenko, one of the first of the dissidents, was only 19 when he was

thrown into a labor camp, where he became a writer. Arrested six times in all, he was at one time assigned to the same camp as Shcharansky.

Soviet Jews tend to trace the government's hostility to a centuries-old tradition of anti-Semitism. But much of it derives from Moscow's almost paranoid fear of the disintegration of the Soviet empire: "If Jewish nationalism can pose at least a theoretical threat to the Soviet Union, what about the nationalist tendencies in Lithuania, Estonia, Georgia, Armenia and the Ukraine? And what of the other religious groups, such as the Baptists, the

Seventh-Day Adventists and the Pentecostals—whose members are being thrown into prison in increasing numbers as "hooligans"? The answer has always been repression. Thus the release of a prominent prisoner like Shcharansky becomes a shrewd diplomatic tactic, suggesting to the West that the Soviet Union is seeking closer relations while obscuring the real situation at home.

Shcharansky was coldly realistic on that score. "The usual practice for the Soviet authorities, whenever they make a concession, is to follow it up with repression against those who could take advantage of it," he said last week. "I'm afraid that my release can be used to tighten up on other Jews in the Soviet Union." But for the moment he was preoccupied with his personal deliverance. "I often dreamed of my arrival in Israel and my reunion with my wife," he said, "and the dreams always had the same ending—I woke up. Now the dream has lasted three days, since the moment I was taken from the KGB prison in Moscow. I am still afraid I will wake up." —By William E. Smith. Reported by Roland Flamini/Jerusalem and John Kohan/West Berlin, with other bureaus



■ Tatyana Osipova



■ Yuri Orlov



■ Anatoli Marchenko



■ Iosif Begun