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Box 72, Folder 7, Soviet Jewry, 1985.



National Conference on Soviet Jewry

January 16, 1985

Dear Friend:

Please don't put this letter aside. What I am writing you about is too important to risk being overlooked or misplaced.

Months ago I spoke about the possibility of a "window of opportunity" that could be opened to effect positive changes for Soviet Jews. I urged that we be ready to act on that opportunity. Now, as U.S.-Soviet relations are beginning to thaw, the critical situation of Jews in the Soviet Union demands our attention and participation as party to that process.

We must also guarantee that the voice of the organized Jewish community is heard in support of Soviet Jews and in protest of Soviet anti-Semitism, harassment and persecution. The arrests of Hebrew teachers and religious activists in the last few months must not go unchallenged.

I hope to see you personally, therefore, in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, January 30th, for our Emergency Action for Soviet Jews. The Emergency Action provides a platform for galvanizing our community, sensitizing Washington policy and opinion leaders, and sending a message to Moscow that we remain committed to our goals.

An exciting, high exposure day is planned, with strategic action components already in place. Members of Congress will join us at a "prisoner lunch" session, hosted by the NCSJ's Congressional Coalition for Soviet Jews and the Congressional Wives for Soviet Jews. After briefings, participants will be appointed to "Action Teams," which will then meet with foreign embassies, scores of government and private agencies, and Members of Congress to enlist their support.

A strong, resounding voice must be heard. Delegations from national agencies, affiliates, Soviet Jewry committees, CRC's, federations and synagogues must be on hand. You can help make that happen through your own participation, and by encouraging others.

If you have not already done so, please complete and return the enclosed registration form. Although it is now past the deadline, it may still be possible to make hotel reservations, if required. To do so, immediately contact Tawnya Jones at our Washington Office, (202) 265-8114.

Although the program is still in the process of unfolding, we have enclosed a tentative schedule. Please plan now to be with us in Washington on January 30th. We will convene at 10:00 A.M. in the Caucus Room (#325) of the Russell Senate Office Building for our opening session. I look forward to seeing you for this important event.

Sincerely, ,

Morris B. Abram
Chairman

A coalition of forty major national organizations and over two hundred local community councils and federations

National Office: 10 East 40th Street, Suite 907, New York, N.Y. 10016 • (212) 679-6122/Cable Address: AMCONSOV, N.Y. • Telex: 237311 NCSJ
Washington Office: 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 • (202) 265-8114



The New York Times

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1985

Advancing the Cause of Disarmament on the Soviet Jewish Front

To the Editor:

Edgar M. Bronfman is right to insist that any move toward détente with the Soviet Union should take into account the condition of Soviet Jews (Op-Ed, Jan. 4). Indeed, Secretary of State Shultz has assured the National Conference on Soviet Jewry that this condition, which he calls "grim," is on the agenda at every meeting with Soviet counterparts.

I am puzzled by Mr. Bronfman's assertion that the Soviet treatment of Jews "has made a cold warrior of the Jewish people," and his reference to "those in Moscow and Washington who are cynically using the issue of Soviet Jews to sabotage the emerging thaw in Soviet-American relations." Moscow, maybe. But we at the Conference on Soviet Jewry have not heard such voices in Washington.

Mr. Bronfman could have made a constructive suggestion on how a change in Soviet treatment of its Jewish minority might advance a thaw:

No agreement with the Soviet Union, particularly one requiring Senate ratification, will result from coming talks until the American people have faith in the Soviet word. Quite apart from any

Soviet violations of existing arms treaties, it is incontestable that the Soviet Union has flagrantly violated solemn undertakings to permit Jewish emigration as set forth in the Helsinki Accords of 1975.

The Soviet Union can acquire some moral stature and establish some faith in its plighted word about future conduct by living up to its past promises at Helsinki, which were broken before the ink was dry.

All those interested in détente and the fate of 2.5- million to 3 million Soviet Jews should consistently remind Soviet authorities that, without compromising their slightest vital interest, they can advance (if they are serious) the cause of disarmament and real peace by the following steps:

• Let them cease punishing the dedicated men and women who teach Hebrew to those who wish to learn.

• Let them release Anatoly Shcharansky and Yosef Begun and other prisoners of Zion.

• Let them cease the brutal treatment of Refuseniks.

• Let them halt the state-controlled, obscene, anti-Semitic libels against Jews as Nazis and Hitlerites (Imagine!).

• Let those who want to leave do so.

Such steps are no more than minimally required by normal human-rights standards. But if taken by the Soviet Union, they would generate a dramatic change in the atmospherics for great agreements and their ratification. As President Kennedy said not long before he was slain, "What is peace after all but a matter of human rights?"

MORRIS B. ABRAM

New York, Jan. 4, 1985

The writer is chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

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10 East 40th Street • Suite 907 • New York, NY 10016

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY

SOVIET JEWRY: THE LEGACY OF ANDROPOV

Highlights of 1984 Developments

With the coming to power of Soviet President Konstantin Chernenko, there were high hopes in the West for a positive change in the policy of Yuri Andropov that would see increased Jewish emigration to Israel. Optimism in this area was based in part upon Chernenko's close association with former Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, during the era when Jewish emigration peaked.

These expectations, however, were not met. On the contrary, 1984 was a bleak year dominated by harassment and a new wave of arrests and persecution. At the same time, the movement for a renewed Jewish religious and cultural life grew, indicating that Soviet Jews are continuing to draw strength and hope from their Jewish heritage, despite tremendous adversity.

WAVE OF NEW ANTI-JEWISH TRIALS

The most notable and serious development affecting Soviet Jewry in 1984 was a concentrated and systematic attack on Hebrew teachers. Since mid-July, continuing harassment against Hebrew teachers and cultural activists culminated in a wave of searches, threats and arrests, suggesting a blatant attempt to crush the determination of a younger generation of Jewish activists. Four of those arrested were sentenced to prison and labor camps on trumped-up charges. Their real "crime" was their active struggle to secure the right to emigrate to Israel or to live as Jews, without discrimination, in the USSR.

On November 19, Yakov Levin, a Hebrew teacher from Odessa, was sentenced to three years in a labor camp for allegedly "circulating false materials which defame the Soviet State and social system." As evidence, the court was informed that Levin possessed copies of Leon Uris' novel, "Exodus," and writings by the Zionist leader Vladimir Jabotinsky, which predated the 1917 Revolution and the creation of the Soviet State.

Levin's intended father-in-law, Mark Nepomniashchy, was himself subsequently arrested in connection with Levin's investigation and charged with the same crime. The net was further tightened when Yakov Mesh, a long-time friend of Levin's, was charged with "refusing to give testimony" and "resisting arrest." Mesh was hospitalized, pending his trial, as the result of abdominal and liver injuries sustained during a brutal beating received at the prison where he was originally held.

On December 10, Iosif Berenshtein of Kiev was sentenced to four years for allegedly "resisting arrest." He was arrested on November 12, while in nearby Novograd Vilinsky to answer allegations of economic crimes made against his aunt, in connection with the purchase of a gravestone. That complaint was weak and was dropped, but Berenshtein remained incarcerated. Upon his arrival at the prison, Berenshtein was placed in an isolation cell with two hard-core criminals. The move was seen by

friends as a way of stigmatizing Jewish activists, and to cloak the arrest as one on criminal rather than political or religious grounds. The inmates attacked him and, using broken glass, inflicted serious injury to his eyes. As a result, he may be permanently blinded in one eye.

Leningrad activist Nadezhda Fradkova was sentenced to two years on the charge of "parasitism." Fradkova had been periodically confined to a psychiatric hospital since April 1983, because authorities insisted that "she must be suffering from hallucinations since she insists on receiving an exit visa for Israel."

Yuli Edelshtein of Moscow was sentenced on December 19 to three years in a labor camp, on a charge of "drug possession," stemming from a search of his apartment in which officials claim to have found opium. The arrest was the forerunner of a series of libelous allegations in the press linking Judaism with drug use. During several house searches, local authorities confiscated and defaced religious artifacts under the guise of a drug investigation.

Commenting on one such search another Jewish cultural activist, Dan Shapira, declared that "these provocations are extremely primitive and are probably an exercise to see how much pressure can be exerted on us. Even Hitler did not start to destroy the Jews immediately; only when he began to understand that no one in the free world would protect them."

As the year drew to a close, three other activists were expected to go to trial, including Aleksandr Kholmiansky, one of Moscow's leading Hebrew teachers. Kholmiansky was arrested while visiting Estonia in July, and detained on a charge of "hooliganism." Authorities later elevated the charge to alleged "weapons possession," based upon a search of the home Kholmiansky shared with his parents, in which they claim to have found a gun and ammunition.

The accelerated judicial action against the Hebrew teachers is seen as a concentrated effort to destroy the remnants of Jewish education and culture in the USSR. While these seven Jewish activists and their families are the most obvious victims of the latest campaign, allegations surrounding their cases represent a threat for all Soviet Jews, with the real purpose being an indictment of Judaism. Soviet authorities are painting a picture to the public at large of a "Jewish underground," characterized by possession of weapons and drug abuse.

Prior to these new attacks, three other Jewish activists, Aleksandr Cherniak, Aleksandr Yakir and Zakhar Zunshain, had been jailed. Fourteen other Prisoners of Conscience (POCs) remained incarcerated, including Anatoly Shcharansky, who was transferred to Perm Labor Camp to serve the remainder of his 13-year term (to 1990) and was reported hospitalized in December. Iosif Begun's wife, Inna, was notified that her husband, a founder of the Hebrew language effort who had already served two terms of internal exile in Siberia and is now in a labor camp, will be refused visitors until the end of 1985.

While nine Jewish Prisoners of Conscience were released upon completion of their terms in 1984, none received their exit visas for Israel. The total number of Jewish Prisoners of Conscience now stands at 22.

EMIGRATION

The rate of Jewish emigration reached a nadir, for the 1984 total of 896 was the lowest recorded in a single year since 1970. The monthly rate declined to fewer than 100 Jews. This reflects the Soviet policy shift begun in 1980, when newly-imposed restrictions sharply limited the number of Jews able to apply for family reunification. The 1984 total, which is less than two percent of the 1979 peak year emigration figure of 51,320, suggests that the Soviets have now effectively closed the gates. These gates had previously been opened for over 260,000 Soviet Jews who were allowed to emigrate in the last 14 years.

The reduction in the number of Jews granted exit visas left an estimated 20,000 "refuseniks" stranded. This figure is a conservative estimate, since it accounts only for those Jews who submitted formal applications to leave for Israel and received official refusals. The figure does not include those who have been arbitrarily denied even the right to apply for exit permits, those who have applied but received no official answer from the authorities, or those who choose not to publicize their plight for fear of reprisals.

Jews categorized as refuseniks were increasingly treated as outcasts from Soviet society. Separated from their families and from Israel, they have been forced to wait indefinitely for permission to leave with no assurance that they will, in fact, ever receive it. Over 120 families are known to have waited more than 10 years. Following the submission of their applications to emigrate, most refuseniks are routinely dismissed from their jobs and forced to take menial jobs or risk criminal prosecution on charges of "parasitism." Other forms of harassment have included the expulsion of their children from colleges and universities, military conscription selectively applied as a punitive measure, defamatory and anti-Semitic attacks in the media, arbitrary arrests, and the confiscation of personal property, with little or no effective means of legal recourse.

To counter Western criticism of its emigration policies, Moscow claimed that "all the Jews who wanted to leave have already done so." With the formation of a public "Anti-Zionist Committee" in 1983, the Soviet Union created a convenient mouthpiece for promoting this fiction and defending official policies. The Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to use the media to promote the claim that the process of family reunification had ended.

According to the Committee, Jews are no longer interested in emigrating, although available statistics indicate that more than 350,000 have begun the emigration process.

ANTI-SEMITISM

The tight policies aimed at Jewish emigration were accompanied by an escalation of efforts to isolate and intimidate Jewish activists. At the same time that it was becoming impossible to leave, it was also becoming virtually impossible to live as a Jew within the Soviet Union.

Scores of private Hebrew teachers were warned by the police and the KGB to stop teaching Hebrew or be severely punished, although the private teaching of other languages is permitted. In many cases the homes of teachers were systematically raided and Hebrew materials confiscated. Private seminars on Jewish history and culture were also repressed and forcibly dispersed. In general, the authorities seemed bent on pursuing policies aimed at the total obliteration of any vestiges of Jewish religious and cultural identity, and the forced assimilation of Soviet Jews.

The public Anti-Zionist Committee continued to spearhead a virulent anti-Semitic campaign in the Soviet media. This campaign, thinly disguised as anti-Zionism, featured scurrilous attacks on individual Jews, Judaism, the Jewish people and the State of Israel. In October, Committee Chairman David Dragunsky held a press conference to reiterate propagandist claims that Zionists and Nazis collaborated during World War II. He alluded to a "deal between the Zionists and Hitler" and, in a bizarre turnabout, blamed them for "launching the war and the policy of genocide." Ignoring the annihilation of six million Jews, and the arrests of known Zionists by the Nazis and by the Stalinist regime, Dragunsky charged that the motivation for the alleged conspiracy was the "removal of capital belonging to the big Jewish bourgeoisie from Germany to Palestine."

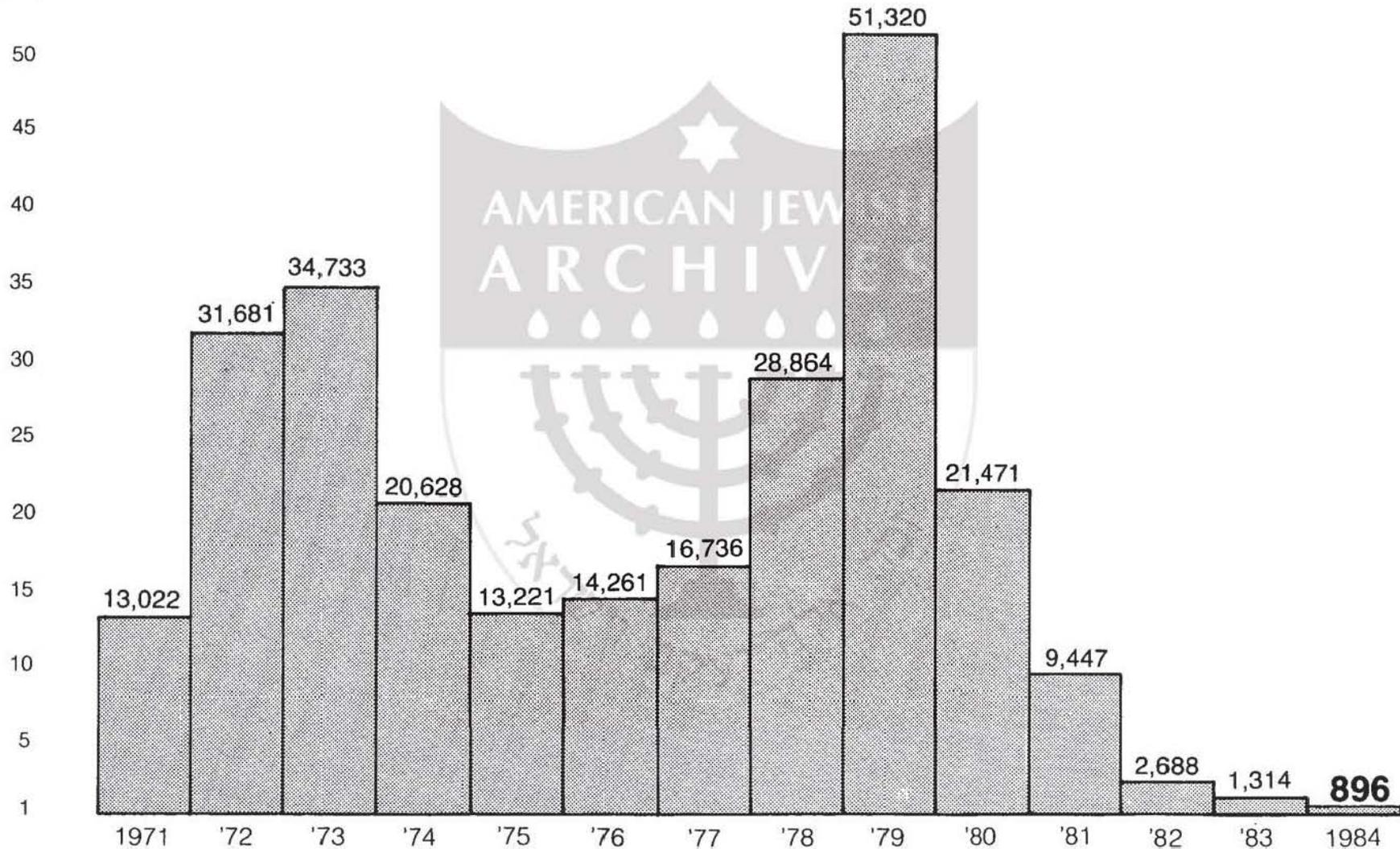
Within a month, an hour-long documentary on Leningrad television equated refuseniks with anti-Soviet behavior, alleging they are coerced by "outsiders" to continue their emigration activities.

Several well-known Leningrad Jews, including Lev Shapiro, Yakov Gorodetsky, Iosif Radomyslsky, and Aba Taratuta, were publicly identified as "Zionists who are nurtured by gifts they receive from the West." Ignoring the fact that they, as well as others, were fired from their jobs after applying for exit visas to Israel, it was alleged that they "refuse to do productive work, preferring to do manual labor and live on gifts." The broadcast, aimed at dissuading Jews from seeking repatriation to Israel, concluded that life in Israel is terrible. It interspersed footage of demonstrations by Jews and Arabs, and warned the Soviet people to "beware of the dangers of Zionism."

Other themes touted by the Anti-Zionist Committee and given widespread media coverage included the equation of Hebrew teachers and Jewish cultural activists with spies, criminals and traitors, the alleged role of Jewish capital in Western military industry, and the "Zionist" influence in the Western media.

Jewish Emigration from the USSR

Thousands





National Conference on Soviet Jewry

DATE: January 16, 1985
TO: Executive Committee
FROM: Morris B. Abram, Chairman
RE: Meeting January 29th

Enclosed you will find our latest mailing regarding our Emergency Action Assembly in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, January 30, 1985.

The Executive Committee will meet the evening before, on Tuesday, January 29, at 7:30 P.M., in The Washington Hilton. If you have not done so yet, please complete the enclosed form and return it to our office.

Dr. Marshall I. Goldman, Associate Director, Russian Research Center, Harvard University, will also be joining us to discuss his assessment of the Shultz-Gromyko meetings. Dr. Goldman has just returned from Vienna where he was present during the meetings as an advisor to the ABC Network, and should provide us with valuable insights.

Following the discussion, I hope to announce a special series of strategy planning sessions which will take place in the next three months, throughout the country.

I look forward to seeing you in Washington.

A coalition of forty major national organizations and over two hundred local community councils and federations

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MEETING SCHEDULE JANUARY 29 -30, 1985

Washington, D.C.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 29

Washington Hilton

7:30 P.M.

"U.S.-Soviet Relations Post Geneva: Joining the Process"

Special Guest: Professor Yehuda Lapidot
Professor Marshall Goldman

Wednesday, January 30

8:00 A.M.

Breakfast Session

EMERGENCY ACTION ASSEMBLY

Wednesday January 30

Capitol Hill

9:30 A.M.

Registration

Russell Senate Office Building
Delaware & "C" St., N.E.
Caucus Room # 325

10:00 A.M.

Opening Session

with representation from the Administration, labor,
education, science, and from the Interreligious and
Black communities

12:00 Noon

"Prisoner Luncheon"

co-sponsored by the Congressional Coalition for Soviet
Jews and the Congressional Wives for Soviet Jews

Meet Members of Congress

2:00 P.M.

Briefing for Action Teams

3:00 - 4:30 P.M.

Action Teams meet with government & non-governmental
agencies

5:00 P.M.

B'nai B'rith International
1640 Rhode Island Ave., N.W.

Report from Action Teams

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET DONE SO, PLEASE COMPLETE, AND RETURN THE REGISTRA-
TION FORM, INDICATING WHICH SESSIONS YOU WILL ATTEND.

TO: Mark Heutlinger:
National Conference on Soviet Jewry
10 East 40th Street, Suite 907
New York, New York 10016

I will attend the following sessions:

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29

_____ Executive Committee, 7:30 P.M., Washington Hilton

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30

_____ Executive Committee Breakfast, 8:00 A.M., Washington Hilton

_____ Emergency Action, 10:00 A.M., Capitol Hill

_____ Luncheon with Members of Congress, 12:00 Noon, Capitol Hill

_____ Please assign me to Action Team

I will arrive in Washington on _____ and have made reservations at
_____.

Enclosed is my check for \$40 per person for meal functions and transportation to Capitol Hill.

NAME _____

AFFILIATION _____

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date January 23, 1985
to M. Bernard Resnikoff
from David Geller
subject Soviet Anti-Semitic Pamphlet

Zach Shuster (God bless his alert, educated head) told me that about a week ago, Yediot had an article about a small group of Israeli geologists who attended a conference in the Soviet Union. The article indicated that contrary to previous experience, they were allowed to travel to cities other than that in which the conference was being held. In the story one of the group, whose name was Koltum, said that he picked up an anti-Semitic pamphlet at the airport. The pamphlet was written in six languages and contained extremely crude and vicious anti-Semitic writing.

It would be interesting for us if you could talk to Koltum about his experience but especially if we could get a copy of the pamphlet.

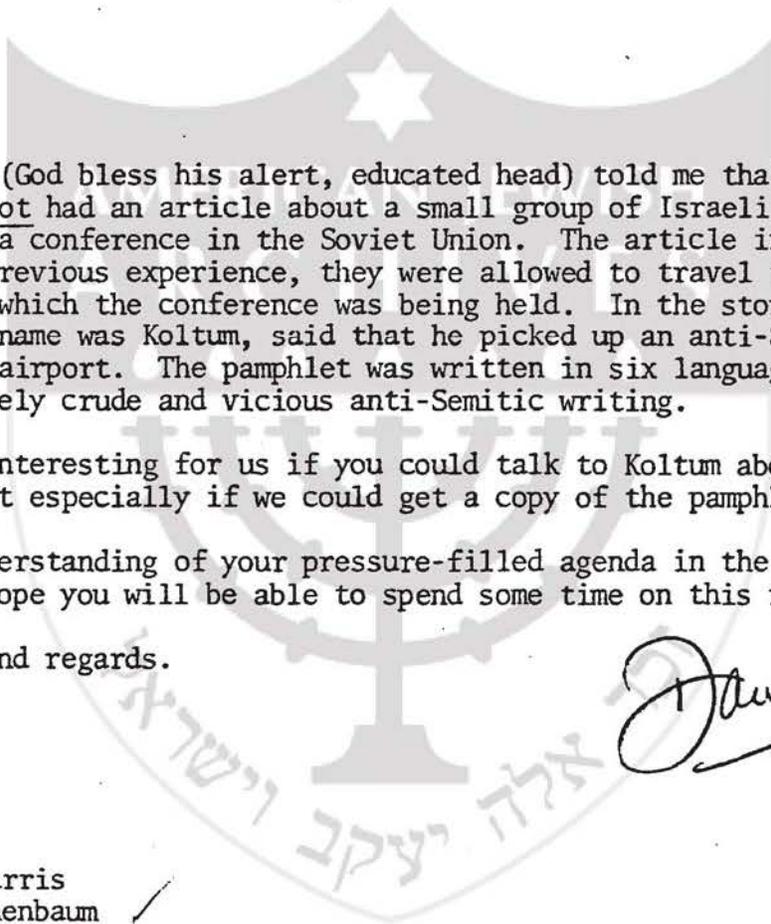
With full understanding of your pressure-filled agenda in the next couple of weeks, I hope you will be able to spend some time on this request.

Thanks and kind regards.



DG/es

cc: David Harris
Marc Tanenbaum





The Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry

8 West 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10018/(212) 354-1316

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**Supported by the United
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February 21, 1985

To: Interested Parties

From: Herbert Kronish, Chairman

On January 23, 1985, the Board of Directors of the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry voted in favor of changing the name of the organization to Coalition to Free Soviet Jews, a name which more accurately portrays the goals of our organization.

The decision to change our name to Coalition to Free Soviet Jews reflects a desire of our organizational members to take a more active stance in the community, and represents part of our 1985/1986 agenda to generate increased grassroots efforts and public awareness of the Soviet Jewry issue.

Given the serious situation facing Soviet Jews today, there is an urgent need for increased community mobilization and an enhanced public image, in addition to our continued work behind the scenes.

For 14 years the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry has been at the forefront of both public and private efforts on behalf of Soviet Jewry, representing a coalition of organizations and community groups in New York City, Long Island, Westchester, Rockland and Bergen Counties.

During this time, our agency has explored many tactics and new approaches to gain freedom for the over two and a half million Jews in the Soviet Union. Our goal has always remained the same: To free Soviet Jews. To free them from prison and labor camps, where they are unjustly imprisoned. To free them from cultural subjugation and religious oppression. To free them so that they may live in the Jewish homeland, Israel.

We plan to formally announce our 1985/1986 agenda and this name change at a news conference on March 21, at 10:30 a.m. at the Sheraton Center in Manhattan. You will be receiving an invitation shortly. Please hold the date.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to do everything possible to rescue over two and a half million Jews in the Soviet Union.



National Conference on Soviet Jewry

3/11/85

February 22, 1985

To: CSCE Committee Members

From: Stanley H. Lowell, Chairman

In preparation for the Experts Meeting on Human Rights scheduled to open in Ottawa, May 7, as part of the CSCE process, I am reconvening our committee. The next meeting will take place on Monday, March 11, at my law firm, 551 Fifth Avenue, Room 1600 at 12:45 p.m. Alan Rose, Executive Vice President, Canadian Jewish Congress, will join us in order that we can coordinate activities prior to and during the Ottawa meeting.

The third edition of the "Blue Book" has been completed and is in draft form. This compendium, which was approved by the International Council of the World Conference on Soviet Jewry, will be available in time for distribution to delegates to the Ottawa meeting.

At our March 11 meeting, we can evaluate the public and private initiatives we should be taking, the Jewish community presence in Ottawa during the six-week session, the advisability (and date) of an inter-parliamentary event, and any other issues which would affect our collective undertakings.

Please call Rita Kluger (212)679-6122 to confirm your attendance. I look forward to seeing you.

A coalition of forty major national organizations and over two hundred local community councils and federations

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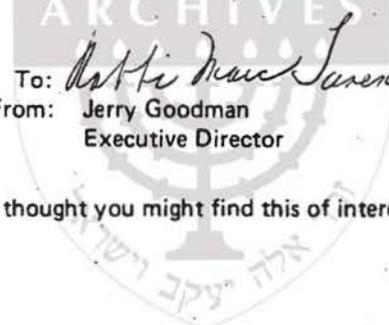


National Conference on Soviet Jewry
10 East 40th St., New York, N.Y. 10016
212-679-6122

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

To: *Artie Marc Jarenbaum*
From: Jerry Goodman
Executive Director

I thought you might find this of interest





National Conference on Soviet Jewry

Chairman
Morris B. Abram

Executive Director
Jerry Goodman

Washington Representative
William D. Keyserling

March 28, 1985

The New Republic
1220 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

To The Editor:

Who could disagree -- certainly not I -- with your accurate portrayal of the Soviet system as persecutor not only of Jews "but Christians and Moslems and democrats and poets and others -- in a wholly ideologized tyranny." (NEW REPUBLIC editorial, April 8, 1985.) Moreover, as one who participated, as the United States expert and later Representative, in the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations, while it hammered out the historic principles of the "Right to Leave One's Country," I cannot morally nor legally particularize that right to any group, even one especially oppressed as are the Jews of the Soviet Union. However, the following principles guide the policy of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) and its 42 constituent organizations:

While it is doubtful that the Soviet Union, a vast despotism of many ethnic groups, will permit those who possess a homeland within its boundaries to leave, it has in the last decade made an exception of 260,000 Jews, as well as ethnic Germans, for whom no such homeland exists. Thus, as in so many other cases, the argument which you advance for the universally perfect becomes the enemy of the particular good.

Perhaps it is this very principle which is the basis for the Talmudic statement in Jewish tradition that "whoever saves one soul, it is as if he had saved the whole world." Would that we had been able to save Jews during World War II! While an indifferent world looked on, some of the six million Jewish martyrs might not have perished in the Holocaust.

The Jews in the Soviet Union do have an urgent claim to leave because as you say they "have been inordinately singled out, stereotyped, and scapegoated, and been made targets of propaganda, prosecution, and psychiatric imprisonment." Surely, the particular focus on the Jews of the Soviet Union is as justified as on the Jews of Ethiopia. In both cases the rescue of Jews was possible. As has been acknowledged, Ethiopian Jews suffer from an unique and cruel set of disabilities. While efforts were being explored to alleviate the misery of millions of other Ethiopians, failure to act would have unnecessarily subjected human life to urgent and extraordinary misery and risk.

A coalition of forty four major national organizations and nearly three hundred local community councils and federations

National Office: 10 East 40th Street, Suite 907, New York, N.Y. 10016 • (212) 679-6122/Cable Address: AMCONSOV, N.Y. • Telex: 237311 NCSJ
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One should not forget that in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, the Soviet Union explicitly recognized an obligation, which the NCSJ has consistently called upon the Soviet Union to discharge, with respect to the reunification of families, a problem of special concern to the scattered Jewish minority.

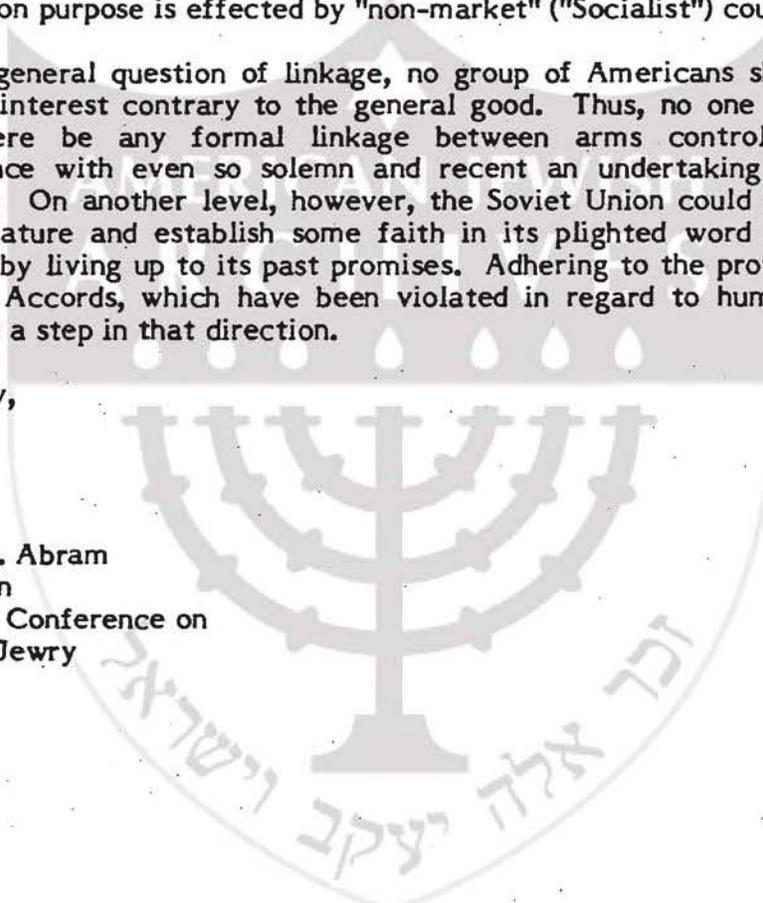
Mainline Jewish organizations have neither the power nor the right to offer Mikhail Gorbachev "a deal" — the emigration of Jews in exchange for U.S. trade, or "an exchange of Jews for a renewal of detente." But existing U.S. law, in the form of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment to trade legislation, already provides for waivers of trade restrictions in the event that its stated emigration purpose is effected by "non-market" ("Socialist") countries.

On the general question of linkage, no group of Americans should press a specific interest contrary to the general good. Thus, no one is suggesting that there be any formal linkage between arms control and Soviet compliance with even so solemn and recent an undertaking as those at Helsinki. On another level, however, the Soviet Union could acquire some moral stature and establish some faith in its plighted word about future conduct by living up to its past promises. Adhering to the provisions of the Helsinki Accords, which have been violated in regard to human contacts, would be a step in that direction.

Sincerely,

Morris B. Abram
Chairman
National Conference on
Soviet Jewry

MBA:ag



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date March 29, 1985
to Marc H. Tanenbaum
from David Harris
subject The New Republic Editorial, April 8, 1985

While I have not had a chance to formulate a full letter, listed below are some of the points I think should be considered:

1. The allegation that "Jews care only about Jews" belies the long-standing balance of universalist and particularist agendas of agencies such as our own. We certainly make no apology for our preoccupation with threatened Jewish communities-how could our historical experience permit us to act in any other way - but our concerns address the broader and underlying issues of democratic values and institutions, intergroup understanding, religious intolerance, the right to leave and return to one's country, world refugee and hunger problems, and international human rights standards and practices. Only in a world that respects the civil and political rights of all groups can any group, including Jews, feel secure.
2. Contrary to The New Republic's suggestion that American Jews have sought to influence U.S. foreign policy vis-a-vis the U.S.S.R. to serve our particular goal of rescuing Soviet Jewry, the fact is that Jewish organizations have remained outside foreign policy discussions and have not sought to interfere in such areas as arms negotiations and other security matters. In fact, it can well be argued that U.S. foreign policy over the last five years has contributed to the deteriorating situation of Soviet Jewry by its hard-line policy towards the Kremlin, but we have recognized that such a foreign policy serves the greater public interest of our country.
3. Contrary to the allegation that American Jewish organizations are prepared to exchange Soviet Jews for "a renewal of detente," there is no truth in this, no more so than the Regan Administration's resumption grain sales to the Soviet Union in 1981 (the grain boycott having been imposed in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan) or the signing of a five-year grain agreement in 1983 with the Soviets indicated any diminution in U.S. abhorrence of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. But the fact remains that there is legislation on the books, specifically the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, which links Soviet emigration performance and MFN. The ad in The Washington Post implies a willingness on the

part of the American Jewish Community to be flexible in its position on the Jackson-Vanik Amendment in exchange for increased emigration, which is the very heart of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment. Further, the ad speaks of current Soviet emigration policy as an obstacle and not the only obstacle to increased trade and exchanges.

4. The editorial refers to "private diplomacy being carried on between Soviet and Jewish leaders." What Soviet and what Jewish leaders? Edgar Bronfman, who, by the way, does not represent an American Jewish organization, has not been to the Soviet Union. The implication is again that American Jews are engaging in outside diplomacy, perhaps at the expense of the greater public good. This is wholly inaccurate. The current discussion of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and trade was in part prompted by a January 1985 report of statement attributed to the chairman of the Soviet State Bank Alkhimov, who, in meeting with official American trade delegation, indicated that "50,000 Jews would be no problem" in exchange for increased trade benefits.

5. The New Republic has admirably described the unique situation of Soviet Jews and their particular problems even in a generally repressive society. Having done so, however, and having sought to attack certain American Jewish efforts in this regard, The New Republic has offered not a single word with respect to alternative solutions to rescuing a community of 2 million Jews faced with vitriolic and endemic anti-Semitism and religious and cultural discrimination.

DAH:CH

cc: David Geller
Allan Kagedan
Sidney Liskofsky



Soviet Jewry: An Overview

by

David A. Harris, Deputy Director
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I. Background

The Soviet Jewish community, officially numbering 1.8 million,¹ is the third largest Jewish community in the world. As a juridically recognized nationality, one of more than 120 nationalities in the USSR, Jews in the Soviet Union are in the unique position of being both a nationality and a voluntary religious community. Thus, a child born to Jewish parents must, at the time of registration for an internal passport (required of all Soviet citizens at age 16), indicate "Jew" as his/her nationality, even though he may not have any religious identification.

Although the Soviet policy toward nationality generally is one of ostensible encouragement of native language, culture and folklore, the Jews have been targetted for assimilation by a deliberate effort to deny them even the basic means of transmitting culture, identity and history afforded virtually every other group. The reasons are complex but derive from a traditional policy of anti-Semitism that predates the October 1917 Revolution, coupled with political exploitation of a visible and vulnerable group, scapegoating to divert public attention from other pressing problems, and fear of the possible implication of a strong, identified Jewish community.

Thus, surviving at great cost the horrors of Stalin's terror, particularly the "Black Years" from 1948 to 1953 - the charges of "Cosmopolitanism," the murder of Yiddish writers and poets, the infamous Doctors' Plot and Stalin's planned deportation of all Soviet Jews to Siberia on the eve of his death; the loss of more than one million Soviet Jews during the Holocaust; and the effort to relegate Jews to a denial or even shame of their identity (at the same time that, ironically, Soviet nationality policy forced the Jewish identity, through the passport system, on children of Jewish parents), Soviet Jews became "The Jews of Silence," to borrow the title of Elie Wiesel's moving book about his visit to the USSR in 1965.

¹ Unofficial estimates of the Soviet Jewish population, taking into account inadequacies in the census method and other factors, range from 2.2 to 3 million.

II. THE EMERGENCE OF A MOVEMENT

How remarkable, therefore, that, despite fifty years of Soviet pursuance of such a policy of forced assimilation, the Israeli victory in the Six Day War in 1967 virtually galvanized the Jewish community into a sense of pride and nascent activism. At about the same time, the novel Exodus by Leon Uris was being unofficially circulated (in Russian) and also had an extraordinary impact on Soviet Jews. In 1968, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia dashed the emerging hopes spawned earlier in the decade of a possible thaw or liberalization in the Soviet bloc, including the USSR. Many Jews, reacting to these developments, and to the growing anti-Semitism/anti-Zionism in the Soviet bloc in the wake of the Six Day War and the liberalization efforts in Poland and Czechoslovakia, began a campaign for repatriation to Israel, the Jewish homeland. And thus an extraordinary phenomenon occurred whose importance cannot be overstated. In the midst of a totalitarian state which had amply demonstrated its willingness and ability to suppress individuals who challenged any aspect of Soviet authority, a movement emerged. Petitions to Soviet and Western government officials, demonstrations in public squares and in the offices of state authorities, contact with the Western press corps in Moscow, and other open manifestations to underscore the Jewish demand to be permitted to leave for Israel, started in the late 1960's and increased from year to year.

It is important to note that, from the beginning, the Jewish activism was based on certain principles: repatriation, family reunification,² respect for Soviet Law, non-violence.³ It was the notion of repatriation, in particular, that distinguished the Jewish movement from a number of other movements in the USSR. Jews did not seek to change the nature of the Soviet system, a fundamentally threatening concept to Soviet authorities, nor did they seek the unrealistic goal of free emigration, much as they may have privately shared these aims. Rather, the Jews sought to leave for Israel, which they considered their historic homeland, pursuant to Soviet precedents which have permitted the repatriation of specific groups -- Germans, Greeks, Poles, Turks -- to their respective homelands.

As the Jewish movement spread to both the main and smaller Jewish population centers -- to such cities as Moscow, Leningrad, Riga, Minsk, Tblisi, Odessa, Kharkov -- large numbers of Jews began the application process by requesting a vyzov, an affidavit from relatives in Israel. At the same time,

² The concept of family reunification was endorsed by Premier Kosygin in 1966 in a statement in Paris in which he indicated the U.S.S.R. would permit reunification of its citizens with family abroad. It took on additional importance in 1975 with the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act. This document, to which the U.S.S.R. was signatory, specifically endorsed the principle of family reunification.

³ The one event that might be interpreted to have been other than non-violent was the 1970 attempt of nine Jews and two non-Jews to hijack a plane from Leningrad to Sweden. No weapons were involved, and the group was arrested before boarding the plane. Importantly, the arrest and the subsequent trial, at which two defendants were given the death sentence, literally galvanized world public opinion and Western leaders, aroused attention to the dramatic plight of those seeking to leave, and led to the commutation of the death sentences (to long prison terms).

SOVIET JEWRY: AN OVERVIEW/3

the emergence of unofficial private study groups in Hebrew language, Jewish history and culture, and Judaism occurred in the absence of any official opportunities and as an intrinsic part of the growth of national Jewish consciousness.

III. THE BALANCE SHEET

Struggling against extraordinary odds, in the midst of a totalitarian state, the movement achieved a number of successes:

1) From 1968 to 1984, more than 270,000 Soviet Jews, previously thought to have been assimilated, asserted their Jewish identity, took the risk of applying and were successful in obtaining exit visas.

2) Interest in the issue came from many quarters: Democratic and Republican Administrations, the U.S. Congress, the academic, labor, religious and scientific communities, foreign governments. Seldom had such a human rights cause generated such support both in the U.S. and abroad.

3) There emerged an heroic group of people in the U.S.S.R. who took special risk by teaching, writing, speaking out and demonstrating, that is, who became activists and symbols in the struggle.

On the other hand, there have been very serious and growing problems:

1) The rate of departure has fluctuated and is today at the lowest point since 1970. Less than 75 Jews per month left in 1984 compared to an average of more than 4,000 per month in 1979.

2) A number of activists have been arrested, tried in courts on trumped-up charges, and sentenced to terms in prison or labor camps. Prominent among the Prisoners of Conscience are Anatoly Scharansky (13-year sentence) and Iosif Begun (12-year sentence). In 1984 a new wave of arrests occurred, targetted at Hebrew teachers and other Jewish activists, and involving defamation of Judaism, allegations of links between Jewish ritual practice and drugs, and desecration of Jewish religious items.

3) Many exit applications of Jews have been denied. There are today an estimated 10-15,000 "refuseniks" in the USSR, several hundred of whom have been waiting for ten years or more while living in extremely difficult conditions without regular employment and often under surveillance.

4) Anti-Semitism, often thinly disguised as anti-Zionism, and manifested in policies affecting higher education and employment, and in books, magazines and newspaper articles and television programs, including Nazi-like caricatures and cartoons of Jews and Judaism, continues unabated.

5) There are but a handful of rabbis, mostly aged, to serve the remaining 50-55 synagogues. There are no rabbinical seminaries in the USSR, no Jewish religious associations or institutions, no courses of Hebrew available to Jews, no courses in Jewish history, no teaching of the Holocaust. As part of the "Potemkin Village" or facade built for primarily Western consumption, visitors

will find a few synagogues in reasonably good condition, a handful of Yiddish books (but no Hebrew titles), a rare musical or theatrical offering, and a few Jewish spokespersons, often under the rubric of the so-called Anti-Zionist Committee (formed in 1983), who hasten to assure Western visitors that all is well in the USSR.

IV. TALKING TO SOVIET OFFICIALS

Western visitors who have sought to discuss the plight of Soviet Jewry with Soviet officials have encountered a variety of responses, such as:

- a) There is no more emigration because no more Jews seek to leave.
- b) The only Jews who are refused exit visas are security risks.
- c) The issue is an internal matter and Western inquiries represent unjustified interference.
- d) All Soviet nationalities are treated equally in the spirit of the Leninist concept of encouragement of the development of nationalities.
- e) There are more anti-Semitic instances in the U.S. than in the USSR; indeed, anti-Semitic vestiges of the Tsarist period have been eliminated under Bolshevik rule.
- f) If anything, Jews are a privileged nationality, disproportionately represented in such professions as law, medicine, science and the arts.
- g) There is no such thing as a Prisoner of Conscience -- Scharansky and the others are criminals convicted of criminal acts.
- h) Jews do not need to go to Israel; they have a homeland of their own -- the Jewish Autonomous District (Birobidzhan) in the USSR.
- i) The issue of Soviet Jewry is unimportant and irrelevant in the context of East-West relations and the hovering threat of nuclear catastrophe.
- j) The issue is not within "the competence" of the official.

Let us briefly examine each of these responses:

a) More than 375,000 Soviet Jews have requested affidavits from Israel but have not yet left. Thousands of Western visitors, including parliamentarians, other public officials, journalists and religious leaders of many faiths have personally met with Soviet Jews unable to leave in a score of cities.

b) Many Jews are refused for no reason or for patently false reasons that have nothing to do with security. Some are refused for work they performed 10-15 years ago; others are refused because of an absence of parental permission (regardless of the age of the applicants); still others because of the vagaries of the bureaucratic system.

SOVIET JEWRY: AN OVERVIEW/5

c) The USSR, being signatory to a number of international agreements which guarantee freedom of conscience and religion (Helsinki Final Act, Universal Declaration of Human Rights), freedom of culture (UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), freedom of family reunification and right to leave (Helsinki Final Act, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), and freedom from discrimination and persecution (UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), cannot claim that these issues are strictly internal matters.

d) Jews, as has been discussed above, are not only not treated equally with other nationalities but have been targeted for cultural and religious disappearance. While other nationalities do encounter often serious difficulties, none is as threatened today with respect to its very continuity as are the Jews.

e) Documentation of anti-Semitism in the USSR abounds and Soviet anti-Semitism, unlike any anti-Semitism that may exist in the U.S., is either government-inspired or government-sanctioned.

f) Young Jews seeking to enter Soviet universities have increasingly little chance of acceptance at the prestigious universities and find many career paths closed. A study of admissions policy at Moscow University's Mathematics Faculty clearly demonstrated a pattern of discrimination against Jewish applicants (and landed the two authors of the study in prison). Certain professions are entirely closed to Jews, and vertical mobility in others is increasingly limited.

g) Scharansky, Begun, Nudel, Brailovsky and the scores of others were imprisoned only for their beliefs and their Jewish activism, not for any criminal acts. The "crime" of Ida Nudel, for which she was sentenced to four years internal exile on a charge of "malicious hooliganism," involved displaying a banner from her Moscow apartment which read "KGB, Give me a visa to Israel". Iosif Begun's "crime," for which he has now been sentenced a third time, was the teaching of Hebrew.

h) Birobidzhan is a distant, desolate region in the Far East, thousands of miles from the Jewish population centers, and has a small Jewish population numbering well under 10,000. Since its founding in 1934 as a Jewish autonomous region, it has never been able to attract a substantial Jewish population, nor has it ever been permitted to develop Jewish educational, cultural or religious institutions.

i) The issue of Soviet Jewry has always been important to the West because it underscores the repressive nature of the Soviet system, undermines Western confidence in Soviet willingness to adhere to international agreements and norms of behavior, and represents an unacceptable legacy in the wake of the Holocaust. On the other hand, Soviet moves to increase emigration and ease the plight of Jews would surely help to remove a stumbling block to improved East-West relations.

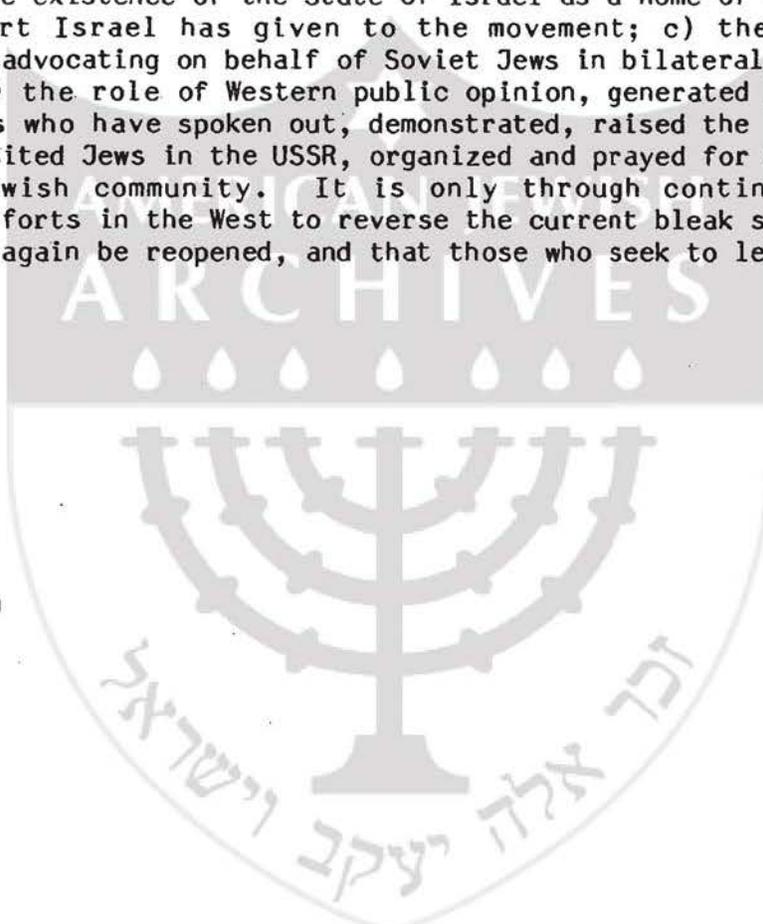
j) Western specialists believe that all Soviet officials who have contact with foreigners must report either vertically and/or laterally to the appropriate organs the substance of discussions, therefore, it is important to raise the issue of Soviet Jewry at most, if not all, meetings with Soviet officials.

V. CONCLUSION

The success of the Soviet Jewry movement has always depended on four factors: a) the courage and determination of Soviet Jews themselves to assert their identity and to seek the right to leave and to return to their historic homeland; b) the existence of the State of Israel as a home of the Jewish people and the support Israel has given to the movement; c) the role of Western governments in advocating on behalf of Soviet Jews in bilateral and multilateral forums; and d) the role of Western public opinion, generated by concerned Jews and Christians who have spoken out, demonstrated, raised the issue with Soviet officials, visited Jews in the USSR, organized and prayed for the redemption of the Soviet Jewish community. It is only through continued and, indeed, intensified efforts in the West to reverse the current bleak situation that the gates may once again be reopened, and that those who seek to leave are permitted to do so.

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Appendix: Jewish Emigration from the Soviet Union



1968 - 1970	4,235
1971	13,022
1972	31,681
1973	34,733
1974	20,628
1975	13,221
1976	14,261
1977	16,736
1978	28,864
1979	51,320
1980	21,471
1981	9,447
1982	2,688
1983	1,314
1984	896

"Aussenpolitik", 4/1985

Boris Meissner

Soviet Policy: From Chernenko to Gorbachev

The election of Mikhail Gorbachev as CPSU general secretary was the Soviet Union's third change of leadership in a few years, and quite clearly the beginning of a transition from one generation to the next. This is the assumption on which Professor Dr Boris Meissner of Cologne University department of East Bloc law bases his precise and detailed outline of the manpower reshuffle and changes embarked on by Mr Gorbachev immediately after his election to consolidate his personal power, given that he sought office without a body of close supporters. His policy statements in speech and writing provide clear and important pointers to the priority of economic development. They refer not to mature socialism but merely to perfecting developed socialism, intensifying the overall economy and converting and re-equipping all branches of industry, a process as comprehensive, important and urgent as industrialisation of the Soviet Union was under Stalin. It remains to be seen how the cost of this concept can be reconciled with promises of higher living standards and guaranteed defence capability. Crucial importance then attaches to the connection with foreign policy concepts: the resumption of dialogue with the United States, the renewed interest in Western Europe and the disciplining of Eastern Europe, i.e. greater concentration on Eurasia and less attention to the Third World in general.

1. Continuity or Change in Soviet Policy?

Chernenko was only to spend 13 months, or even less than Andropov, as leader of the CPSU and thus of the Soviet Union. His death on 10 March 1985 necessitated the third change of leadership in the Kremlin since Brezhnev's death.

Andropov and Chernenko were 79 and 82 when they were elected, making them the oldest Party officials ever to take over as CPSU general secretary. Yet it was due less to their age than to their serious ill-health that their leadership was so soon cut short. Gorbachev, whose election as Chernenko's successor came as no surprise, was 54 and the youngest member of the present Kremlin leadership, but not the youngest ever to become general secretary. Stalin at 43 was younger by far.

Given his age we can expect a lengthy period to be associated with the name Gorbachev, always assuming nothing unforeseen happens. It may well be that the short periods under Andropov and Chernenko with which he was associated will later come to be seen as part of a uniform era bearing his name. That was certainly the case with the "Khrushchev

Era" even though developments after Stalin died were initially influenced by Malenkov.

Gorbachev's assumption of power ended the interregnum in the Soviet Union that basically began at the beginning of the "Brezhnev Era". A definite departure from the recent past has yet to take place, due partly to Gorbachev's need to first consolidate his leadership. On the other hand he was associated with Chernenko, to whom he largely owes his rise to power, for much longer than he was with Andropov. He may have mentioned the shortcomings and missed opportunities of the "Brezhnev Era" but he has so far shunned a genuine change of course. For the time being only the style of leadership has changed, and with it the greater emphasis on crucial change to which Gorbachev's predecessors also referred. He rightly notes that deeds are what count, not words. Gorbachev may have succeeded in reviving to a limited extent the feeling of fundamental change that marked the beginnings under Andropov but soon subsided. But will that be enough to achieve the wide-ranging objectives he has set himself?

2. Soviet Policy in Transition from Chernenko to Gorbachev

During leadership changes since Brezhnev's death two specific weaknesses of the Soviet Communist single-party system have again been apparent. First, the lack of a formal succession provision, creating difficulties when two equally strong candidates are in the running or a single candidate lacks a substantial majority in the central committee. In practice the politbureau as a "regency council" performs the role of an electoral body, but its decision requires formal confirmation by the central committee. In certain circumstances this can make it necessary for the candidate for general secretary to make election concessions to the leading oligarchs in the politbureau.

Second, the new general secretary lacks the opportunity a Western head of government has of naming a Cabinet that is largely to his own liking. He is, in contrast, obliged to take over the existing politbureau, central committee secretariat and highest organs of state, including his adversaries. So he can only gradually effect manpower changes at the top in Party and state. Additional difficulties arise when the new general secretary has only a narrow power base or his health deteriorates faster than expected, as was the case with Andropov and Chernenko.

All these factors forced Andropov after his controversial election to lay special emphasis on a balance of manpower in the "leadership collective" full members of the politbureau make up. That was all the more important as the oligarchic element in the Kremlin leadership had gained substantially in strength at the end of the Brezhnev era in relation to the

monocratic element represented by the general secretary. This was evident after the first change of leadership in November 1982 when, at Andropov's behest, the Soviet press covered the weekly sessions of the politbureau, which had not previously been the usual practice.

Maintenance of this balance of power resulted not only from the existing power constellation in individual and institutional terms; it was also necessary on objective grounds. Ustinov and Gromyko, to whom Andropov largely owed his election, and in their wake Romanov, advocated a policy clearly favouring a harder line in home affairs, continuing to be based on the primacy of heavy industry and armaments. Chernenko, Tikhonov and Gorbachev in contrast attached greater importance to raising living standards and accordingly advocated greater consideration for consumer goods, the service sector and agriculture. They were also, in common with most new top officials appointed by Andropov, more in favour of reform measures.

These contrasting views on home affairs among the Kremlin leaders was also apparent after the second change of leadership in February 1984¹. It also found expression in different views on East-West detente and arms control policy.

Chernenko's election as general secretary offered Gromyko and Ustinov an opportunity of further consolidating their power in foreign affairs and defence respectively. Chernenko, who mainly relied on Tikhonov and Gorbachev, was forced to twist and turn on account of this power constellation and in view of his poor health. As a result, he initially failed to provide for the acceptance of Gorbachev, promoted to second secretary of the central committee, as a member of the top Kremlin leadership and to arrange for him to exert greater influence on foreign policy.

In spring 1984 there was a clear power shift in favour of the orthodox wing in the politbureau, supported by advocates of primacy of heavy industry and armaments and a more pronounced arms build-up. This led to a zigzag course of Soviet policy that was particularly apparent in the foreign policy sector.

This trend was enhanced by the deterioration in Chernenko's health. Like Brezhnev, he was forced to take longer breaks during which Gorbachev stood in for him as leader, concentrating mainly on economic affairs. At an award presentation ceremony in Smolensk on 28 June 1984² Gorbachev cautiously advocated resumption of an "honest dialogue" with the United States and an improvement in international relations. Chernenko voiced similar views in a 2 September 1984 *Pravda*

¹ Cf B. Meisser, "Sowjetpolitik: Von Andropow zu Tschernenko," in *Aussenpolitik*, vol 35, 1984, p. 248 ff; M. D. Zlotnik, "Chernenko Succeeds," in *Problems of Communism*, March-April 1984, p. 17 ff.

² *Pravda*, 29 June 1984

interview shortly before returning to Moscow from nearly two months on holiday.

The dismissal of Marshal Ogarkov, the self-willed chief of the Soviet general staff, on 6 September 1984 as a result of a clash triggered by his 9 May 1984 interview in *Krasnaya Svezda*, led to further changes in the Kremlin power constellation. As this clash seriously hit the orthodox wing it constituted a shift in power in favour of Chernenko and Gorbachev, enabling them to pursue a more flexible approach to foreign policy to back up the many domestic projects they envisaged. The resumption of talks with the United States at Foreign Minister level agreed on 10 September 1984 marked a departure from the isolationist policy of Gromyko, whose "rejection strategy" had evidently been supported not only by Ustinov and Romanov but also by a major section of the military leadership. After Reagan's re-election the USSR was also to return to the conference table in Geneva. This development played a fundamental part in the joint consolidation of the power position of Chernenko and Gorbachev. It prompted Ustinov in a speech in honour of Chernenko's 73rd birthday on 27 September 1984³ to refer to Chernenko as the "supreme commander" (*verchovnij glavnokomanduyushchij*).

Only at this stage did Gorbachev succeed in joining the real Kremlin leadership, which up till then had consisted of Chernenko, Tikhonov, Gromyko and Ustinov. Given this change in status Afanasiev, editor-in-chief of *Pravda*, described him in early October in conversation with Japanese journalists as the "second general secretary of the CPSU"⁴. The consolidation of Gorbachev's power position was enhanced by Ustinov's illness, leading to his death in December 1984. It led to the appointment of Marshal Sokolov, previously responsible merely for military administration and thus lowest-ranking member of the Soviet supreme command, as Soviet Defence Minister. Marshal Akhromeyev, who had succeeded Ogarkov as chief of the general staff, was not appointed a First Deputy Defence Minister as was previously the custom. This post was in contrast awarded to the supreme commander of land forces, Marshal Petrov, who had advocated views differing from Ogarkov's on the organisational structure of the armed forces.

Chernenko, who since autumn 1984 had embarked on a surprising spate of activity, was interested, as were other older members of the politbureau, in maintaining a certain balance in the "leadership collective". That was why Gromyko, who had adjusted to the new power situation, and not Gorbachev, was entrusted with the speech in honour of the 67th anniversary of the October Revolution on 6 November 1984⁵. This attitude prompted Chernenko not to appoint further members to

³ *Pravda*, 28 September 1984

⁴ Cf C. G. Ströhm, "Neuer Titel," in *Die Welt*, 11 October 1984

⁵ *Pravda*, 7 November 1984

the politbureau. His hopes of living to see the XXVII CPSU party congress, which was to be brought forward to the end of 1985, were not to be fulfilled. The renewed decline in his health in the second half of December 1984 led to his death on 10 March 1985.

During this transitional period Gorbachev was able to further expand his power position. His successful visit to Great Britain added to his personal prestige. He was thereupon generally rated Chernenko's predestined successor⁶. So the third change in leadership went ahead more smoothly. His rival Romanov is said to have backed Grishin as an alternative candidate in a bid to gain time. If he did so, it was in vain. It is hard to say what part Gromyko played prior to the succession. It was Gromyko who presented to the central committee on 11 March 1985 the politbureau's proposal to elect Gorbachev as general secretary⁷, but that need not necessarily be taken as meaning he played the part of a "kingmaker".

Subsequent events suggest he did not. After all, it was Chernenko who proposed Andropov as general secretary to the central committee after failing in his own initial bid for power. The arguments Gromyko marshalled in Gorbachev's support were not solely favourable, which was why his speech was only published a week later as a small brochure by the state publishing house rather than in the Soviet press. Gromyko was mainly concerned to stress the unanimity of the Kremlin leadership in connection with Gorbachev's candidature. He said that rifts in the Soviet leadership as alleged abroad existed "neither today nor yesterday". Yet he added that on account of his length of service he might have realised "somewhat more clearly than some comrades" that Gorbachev, whose qualities he particularly praised, was the right man for the job.

This was intended as a commitment to the new Party leader with a view to retaining control of foreign policy. It also served to reinforce Gorbachev's candidature in the event of central committee resistance, which was expected but arguably overrated by Gromyko. There was resistance, as can be seen from Gorbachev's election by the central committee having been solidly in his favour (*edinodushno*) rather than unanimous (*edinoglazno*), as was the case with Andropov and Chernenko. This turn of phrase, by no means usual in describing the way voting goes, leads one to assume that not all central committee members, mainly belonging to the older generation, were in favour of the candidate proposed. This critical attitude is likely to have been due more to fears of major individual and institutional changes and less to Gorbachev's age.

Gorbachev and his supporters were keen to upstage their opponents by means of speed. The early election made it possible to concentrate attention in the Soviet press on the change of leadership and a front-page

⁶ Cf A. Brown, "Gorbachev: New Man in the Kremlin," in *Problems of Communism*, May-June 1985, p. 16 ff.
⁷ *Pravda*, 12 March 1985

pen portrait of the new Party leader, relegating his predecessor's obituary to page two. Mourning ceremonies were also cut short to accelerate the return to normal. In unusually swift succession two plenary sessions of the central committee, the April and July plenaries⁸, were held. Between them a ceremony was held in the Kremlin on 8 May 1985 to mark the 40th anniversary of VE Day⁹ and consultations on scientific and technological progress were held on 12 June 1985¹⁰, preceded by an 8 April 1985 gathering of industrial managers, specialists and economists. At all these events the new general secretary dealt at length with his domestic and foreign policy programme. Gorbachev was also keen to make contact with the general public, on the street and not just in individual factories, to make himself better-known. On his travels he outlined his policy in greater detail in speeches in Leningrad on 17 May 1985¹¹ and in Dnepropetrovsk on 27 June 1985¹². In Minsk he conferred with military commanders on 10 July 1985¹³. He made use of both the 23 April and 1 July 1985 plenary sessions of the central committee and the 2-3 July 1985 session of the Supreme Soviet¹⁴ to undertake major changes in the top Party and state leadership sooner than expected. Elections of delegates to the XXVII CPSU party congress, which the April plenary session decided was to be held on 25 February 1986, now provide him with an opportunity of pressing ahead with manpower changes at the middle level of leadership.

3. Party and State Leadership from Andropov to Gorbachev

Andropov sought, by setting up a team of his own, to end his dependence on old members of the politbureau whatever their tendency¹⁵. One of his first manpower decisions was to promote the Azerbaidjanian Party leader, Aliyev, whom he trusted on account of his KGB career, from candidate to full member of the politbureau.

He then tried to enlist the support of leading Greater Russian officials who had for the most part been Kirilenko henchmen (Kirilenko had long been seen as a possible successor to Brezhnev) and had lost their patron when Kirilenko died¹⁶. This began with Ryshkov's appointment as central committee secretary in charge of economic affairs, followed by Ligachov's appointment as central committee secretary and head of the important central committee department in charge of Party organisation,

⁸ *Pravda*, 24 April and 2 July 1985

⁹ *Pravda*, 9 May 1985

¹⁰ *Pravda*, 13 June 1985

¹¹ *Pravda*, 18 May 1985

¹² *Pravda*, 28 June 1985

¹³ *Pravda*, 11 July 1985

¹⁴ *Pravda*, 3 and 4 July 1985

¹⁵ Cf B. Meissner, *Sowjetische Kurskorrekturen. Brezhnev und seine Erben*, Berne 1984, p. 30 ff.

¹⁶ Kirilenko was long both head of the important Sverdlovsk CPSU region and first deputy chairman of the central committee bureau for the RSFSR, which was abolished in 1966.

the cadre department. Solomentsev, longstanding Premier of the RSFSR, was appointed chairman of the Party control committee on Pelshe's death and promoted from candidate to full member of the politbureau. Vorotnikov, who succeeded him as Prime Minister of the RSFSR, became first a candidate, then a full member of the politbureau under Andropov. Chebrikov, who took over from Fedorchuk as head of the KGB (while Fedorchuk became Soviet Interior Minister), was made a candidate member of the politbureau. Chebrikov had been a member of the Brezhnev faction but served as a leading KGB official under Andropov.

Over and above these changes, and despite claims to the contrary, manpower changes in key Party and government posts were strictly limited under Andropov. Chernenko's influence on the central committee apparatus remained largely intact, as did Tikhonov's in the Soviet Council of Ministers. Tikhonov admittedly had to accept limits to his position as *de jure* head of government when Aliyev and Gromyko were appointed his first deputies.

After the second change of leadership Chernenko was able to rely on much stronger support in the Party and state apparatus, and he sought to strengthen it by circumspect cadre policy. He came to terms with leading officials promoted by Andropov who now tended more to look to Gorbachev for support. This could be seen from the fact that in September 1984 a further erstwhile Kirilenko henchman, Ryabov, was appointed Deputy Soviet Premier.

On assuming power Gorbachev had allies but not a team of close associates and henchmen of his own. That was largely because he had previously served mainly in his own region, Stavropol, and at Party headquarters in Moscow, where he was initially concerned only with agriculture¹⁷. He was only entrusted with other sectors of Party work under Andropov and Chernenko, presenting him with an opportunity of establishing personal contacts that assured him of a majority in the politbureau. He used the experience gained under his predecessors to reach important manpower decisions at Federal level with amazing alacrity on assuming power, thereby further extending his power base. The process of concentration in the Party and state apparatus he has initiated will contribute toward further consolidation of his power position at Federal level. Gorbachev has also energetically resumed the purge of corrupt and incompetent Party and government officials at various administrative levels begun under Andropov and slowed down again under Chernenko. His aim is to rejuvenate "leading cadres".

After the change in leadership Gorbachev made use of the April and June 1985 central committee plenary sessions to undertake significant

17 Cf Christian Schmidt-Häuer, *Michail Gorbatschow*, Munich 1985, p. 65 ff., and E Schneider, "Michail Sergejewitsch Gorbatschow," in *Osteuropa*, vol 35, p. 396 ff.

changes in the Kremlin leadership. First, he has increased the number of his allies, linking some of them even closer to himself. Second, he has succeeded in weakening the manpower base of the orthodox wing in bringing about a decisive realignment of power in the Kremlin leadership. It is remarkable that he has so soon succeeded in forcing his rival Romanov out of the politbureau and the central committee secretariat¹⁸. He has set about expanding and consolidating his power base with the aid of members of both groups to which Andropov resorted. Of the "Uralians," all Greater Russians, he promoted Ligachov and Ryshkov, the two leading central committee secretaries, at the April 1985 plenary session, making them full members of the politbureau without serving as candidates. Since Romanov's departure Ligachov must clearly be regarded as the second secretary to the central committee mainly responsible for ideological affairs, while Ryshkov is in charge of coordinating the activities of all central committee secretaries concerned with economic issues. Of the three new central committee secretaries, Yeltsin is also a former Kirilenko man, while Nikonov, in charge of agriculture, has been associated with Gorbachev in the past. Zaykov, Romanov's successor as head of the Leningrad Party organisation, is in charge of the arms industry, a sector with which he is conversant.

The importance of the "Caucasian" group was increased with the promotion of Shevardnadze from candidate to full member of the politbureau at the July 1985 plenum and his subsequent appointment as successor to Gromyko as Soviet Foreign Minister. Aliyev's continued importance was shown by him being entrusted with the speech marking Lenin's birthday on 22 April 1985¹⁹. Other members of the group are Razumovsky, latterly first secretary of the Krasnodar region in the northern Caucasus, appointed by Gorbachev to head the most important Party organisation department in the central committee, the cadre department.

KGB leader Chebrikov was promoted at the April plenary from candidate to full member of the politbureau with the rank of Army general. The new Defence Minister, Marshal Sokolov, a 74-year-old professional soldier, has in contrast only been made a candidate member of the politbureau.

In the wake of these changes the politbureau at present consists of 13 full and five candidate members, while the number of central committee secretaries has been increased from 10 to 11. Politbureau members other than M. S. Gorbachev are, in Cyrillic alphabetical order: G. A. Aliyev, V. I. Vorotnikov, V. V. Grishin, A. A. Gromyko, D. A. Kunayev, E. K. Ligachov, N. I. Ryshkov, M. S. Solomentsev, N. A. Tikhonov, V. N. Chebrikov, E. A. Shevardnadze and V. V. Shcherbitski. Candidate

¹⁸ At the 1 July 1985 plenary session of the central committee. Cf *Pravda*, 2 July 1985.
¹⁹ *Pravda*, 23 April 1985

members are P. N. Demichev, V. I. Dolgikh, V. V. Kuznetsov, P. N. Ponomarev and S. L. Sokolov.

Leading central committee secretaries, and also politbureau members, are Gorbachev, Ligachov and Ryshkov. Secretaries Ponomarev and Dolgikh are candidate members of the politbureau. Other central committee secretaries are K. V. Russakov, M. V. Zimyanin, I. V. Kapitonov, V. P. Nikonov, L. N. Zaykov and B. N. Yeltsin.

Gorbachev knows the oligarchic structure of "collective leadership" of which he forms part can only be limited or overcome if the posts of Party leader and head of government are closely associated as they were for a while under Stalin and Khrushchev. He has thus deliberately avoided taking over the nominal post of head of state. Gromyko's election as chairman of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet, or head of state, on 2 July 1985 may create the impression of a return to job-sharing as introduced to consolidate "collective leadership" after Khrushchev fell from power in 1964²⁰. In reality, given the existing power constellation, this move is more likely to have strengthened Gorbachev's power position and thus the monocratic element. First, Gorbachev reserves the right at a future date to take on himself, or entrust to someone in whom he has confidence, the post of Soviet Prime Minister. Given the age of the present incumbent, Tikhonov, the change of head of government ought not to present any great difficulty. Gromyko no longer being First Deputy Premier leaves Aliyev, who now holds the post on his own, in a stronger position. Second, the appointment of Shevardnadze, a man inexperienced in foreign affairs²¹, as Foreign Minister gives Gorbachev an opportunity of exerting greater influence on foreign policy decision-making processes and thus on the course Soviet foreign policy takes.

Crucial importance will attach to whether Gorbachev succeeds in carrying out a comprehensive changing of the generations at all levels of the Soviet establishment. Experience has shown that middle leadership cadres are particularly reluctant to accept major changes in the existing ruling and social system. So Gorbachev can only hope to be successful if he relies in his cadre policy on both the middle and the younger generation.

Stalin twice used the younger generation as a lever to bring about revolutionary change by means of manpower changes at the top. The first time was when, in the struggle for power after Lenin's death, he pushed through the "General Line". The second was the Great Purge of the mid-1930s by which he stabilised his sole rule. In both cases the change was accompanied by a swifter pace of change in social structure. Using this method of leapfrogging an entire generation in both cases involved a

²⁰ Cf Meissner (Footnote 15), *op cit*, p. 15.

²¹ His first official appearance as Foreign Minister was at the ceremony to mark the tenth anniversary of the CSCE Final Act held in Helsinki at the end of July 1985. Cf "Spröder Auftritt Schewardnades in Helsinki," in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 1 August 1985.

heavy waste of leaders to an extent the Soviet Union could not afford under Khrushchev, who sought partly by means of destalinisation, i.e. limited liberalisation, and partly by insufficiently thought-out administrative reforms at least partially to bring about a similar rejuvenation of leading cadres.

Both approaches continue to be feasible, but they can only be adopted successfully if Gorbachev has both a sufficient power base and the necessary energy and a clear concept of reform. His personal prerequisites are more favourable than was the case with Khrushchev. He is much better educated than his predecessor²² and would thus be more likely to be accepted by young cadres. Like his predecessors he is a Russian, but he has much more charisma. As he was only a child during the Second World War his relationship with military leaders will probably be more problematic than that of Andropov and Chernenko. As a leading official responsible mainly for agriculture he was constantly at loggerheads with the "iron-eaters," as — in his day — was Polyansky. A military veto for instance ruled out the introduction of a lightweight tractor he advocated on account of conditions in the Stavropol region. As far as is known, Gorbachev has no closer ties with either the State Security Committee (KGB) or the Interior Ministry (MVD). So his success will depend to a large extent on whether he is able to convince both the bureaucratic and the military sections of the ruling elite that progress in further development of the Soviet Union enabling it to maintain its world power status will only be possible if they are prepared to subordinate their special interests to overall considerations. The CPSU general secretary is also chairman of the Soviet Defence Council²³. In this capacity he will need to take care to ensure that the reduction in the arms burden he, like Andropov and Chernenko before him, envisages is in keeping with military requirements. In his speech at the election plenary of the central committee he promised the armed forces they would continue to have everything they needed to "ensure the security of the Soviet Union and its allies". He later reiterated this pledge.

The replacement of General Yepishev, long-serving senior political commissar of the Soviet army and navy, is a clear sign of the beginnings of a change of generation in the Soviet supreme command. Yepishev, who was appointed head of the main political administration at the Defence Ministry and head of the military department at the central committee under Khrushchev, has been replaced by a much younger man, Lt-General Lissichev, who was previously senior political commissar with the Soviet Armed Forces Group in Germany. Gorbachev is clearly keen

²² Gorbachev is the first law graduate in the politbureau since Lenin; he also holds a diploma in agronomy.

²³ Confirmed by Zamyatin, head of the central committee's international information department; cf Reuters report dated 1 August 1985.

to link the rejuvenation of the military leadership on which he has embarked (and of which further instances could be cited) with a modernisation of the armed forces as such. It may be assumed that he will bear in mind the ideas developed by Marshal Ogarkov before he was replaced chief of the general staff²⁴.

4. Gorbachev's Domestic Policy Programme

In conjunction with Gorbachev, Chernenko continued the limited reforms initiated by Andropov²⁵. He was not entirely able to dispense with the use of "administrative methods" to boost extremely low labour productivity. Yet Chernenko still failed to maintain the momentum of short-term economic upswing achieved under Andropov. In 1984 the official GNP growth rate, 2.6 per cent, fell below the 1982 level. In reality it was probably only about 1.5 per cent, or close to the low point reached in 1979. In the first six months of 1985 industrial output increased by a mere 3.1 per cent. Oil and coal production in 1984 were down on 1983, and in oil's case this trend continued in the first half of 1985. The same goes for steel production. The only substantial increase has been in natural gas production. Agricultural output in 1984 was at the same level as in 1983, making substantial cereal imports from the United States necessary. A better harvest in 1985 may have a favourable effect on other sectors of the economy.

Many signs suggest that the technological gap between the Soviet Union and the West, especially the United States, has tended to widen in recent years. Kremlin leaders are particularly worried about the technological momentum that might be triggered by the Strategic Defence Initiative proposed by President Reagan, widening the gap still further. So Gorbachev is particularly interested in the "Complex Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress of the Soviet Union for the Years 1986 to 2005" begun under Chernenko. It is intended as an integral part of the Party programme, the new version of which will, alongside the new Party statute, be submitted for approval by the XXVII party congress.

In keeping with Andropov's basic outlook Gorbachev has invariably taken a more realistic view of the level of economic and social development reached in the Soviet Union. Yet in the end there was no great difference between them on this issue, as shown by Chernenko's fundamental article entitled "Doing Justice to the Requirements of Developed Socialism" in the December 1984 issue of *Kommunist*²⁶. Chernenko had likewise realised that the Soviet Union was still at the outset of a very

²⁴ This would seem to be indicated by, among other pointers, the dismissal of the supreme commander of strategic missiles, Marshal Tolubko, who was promoted chief marshal of the artillery under Andropov.

²⁵ Cf Meissner, (Footnote 1), op cit, p. 254 ff.

²⁶ *Kommunist*, No. 18/84, p. 3 ff.

long stage in “developed socialism” and had reached a very low level of maturity, so that it was inappropriate to refer to “mature socialism” as he had previously done.

But Gorbachev was keener than Chernenko to implement comprehensively and as fast as possible the reform measures classified under the heading “perfecting developed socialism”²⁷. He was, and still is, of the opinion that the increase in productivity envisaged can only be attained by greater intensification of the economy as a whole. Gorbachev sees intensification of the economy as such a crucial task that it must be accomplished as soon as possible by resort to all available means. In this connection he noted in his 10 December 1984 programmatic speech: “Life presents us with a task of enormous political importance in that the economy must be raised to a qualitatively new scientific and technological, organisational and economic level and make decisive headway in intensifying social production by boosting efficacy”. He added that: “The process of intensifying the economy must become a concern for the entire people and assume the same political importance as industrialisation of the country did in its day”²⁸.

He plans to achieve the intensification of the economy he envisages partly by means of “persistently perfecting the economic mechanism and the overall system of control” and partly by accelerating the development and application of scientific and technological progress. In all his speeches he has particularly emphasised the “conception of accelerating the country’s socio-economic development on the basis of scientific and technological progress”. In his 23 April 1985 speech to the central committee²⁹ he said: “The task of accelerating the growth rate is entirely feasible if the main emphasis is placed on intensifying the economy and accelerating scientific and technological progress, if management and planning, structural and investment policy are revised, organisation and discipline are increased and the style of work is improved fundamentally”. At the 11 June 1985 central committee meeting³⁰ he advocated a “new quality” of development enabling “swift progress in strategically important directions”. Gorbachev particularly stressed in this connection mechanical engineering, electronics, electrical engineering and biotechnology, calling these industries “catalysts of progress”. Manufacturing capacity was mainly to be converted in these sectors. He emphasised that it was “basically a matter of re-equipping all sectors of the economy on the basis of latest scientific and technological know-

27 Cf H.-H. Höhmann, “Sowjetische Wirtschaftspolitik unter Gorbatschow,” in *Europa-Archiv*, vol 14, 1985, p. 425 ff. See also, on Soviet economic difficulties and the limited scope for reform, B. Rumer, “Soviet Economy: Structural Imbalance,” in *Problems of Communism*, July-August 1984, p. 24 ff, and F. I. Kushnirsky, “Limits of Reform,” *ibid.*, p. 33 ff.

28 *Pravda*, 11 December 1984

29 *Pravda*, 24 April 1985

30 *Pravda*, 12 June 1985

how". With this aim in view a programme of "reconstruction of all factories and all sectors" was to be drawn up.

At the 11 June 1985 central committee meeting Gorbachev stated that the politbureau had merely expressed "overall" approval of the draft five-year plan for 1986-90 and the long-term plan for the period extending until the year 2000 as drawn up by the State Planning Committee and referred it to the Council of Ministers for "improvement". The reason was that the draft had failed to provide for transitional measures to ensure intensive priority for development of a number of industries and that the plan targets were too low. He called for a "swift change" toward intensification of the economy and for "revolutionary changes" necessitated both by the domestic situation and by "external circumstances". Emphasising the need for a reappraisal and reorientation of cadres, he said: "We must not hesitate, we cannot afford to wait, we have no time in which to develop greater momentum. This time has been fully used in the past. We must move forward and gain in pace". Alongside changes in investment and structural policy Gorbachev sees as a crucial precondition for regaining the economic dynamism lost for the most part in the 1970s an improvement in the entire system of management and planning³¹. For this purpose the State Planning Committee is to be transformed into a "scientific-economic organ" and the State Committee for Science and Technology is to be entrusted with new tasks in helping to solve the problems of economic intensification. Federal Ministries are in future to concentrate mainly on "strategic issues", with special management bodies to be set up to look after leading economic complexes. Mergers of Ministries into larger units are mainly to take place at the level of Union Republics, with the principle of central planning and control being retained. "Socialist property" as the basic principle of the system of economic planning is indeed to be "strengthened". Yet at the same time the responsibilities of manufacturing associations and factories are to be substantially extended.

These comments on "perfecting the economic mechanism" provide no clear idea of the shape Soviet economic administration is to take, and much about Gorbachev is reminiscent of Khrushchev, who has lately ceased to be a name not to be mentioned. It remains unclear how the contradiction between comprehensive central planning and control, with a greater role for the Party, and plans for greater autonomy for manufacturing associations and factories is to be resolved. Ligachov has emphatically ruled out any idea of market economy trends.

Gorbachev stresses the need to forge ahead in many directions simultaneously in implementing the intensification programme. "Otherwise we will make no headway and be unable to accelerate our progress."

³¹ Cf Gorbachev's comments at the 11 June 1985 central committee meeting and his 27 June 1985 Dnepropetrovsk speech.

Raising the enormous funds needed to invest in this sector is to be combined with a further increase in living standards and a guarantee of adequate defence capability. Given the growing difficulties encountered by the Soviet economy, based as it is on a framework of transmission of orders and on a cumbersome bureaucratic system, these three targets will not even be simultaneously achievable if greater readiness for productivity can be stimulated and existing reserves are better utilised than at present.

In the circumstances there are two possibilities of mobilising the funds needed for the planned conversion of the Soviet economy: either a substantial reduction in the arms burden or a considerable cut in welfare programmes advocated by Gorbachev and Chernenko alike. That would amount to a reduction in living standards that are still very low, while the first option would only be possible in the event of a transition to genuine detente policy and against stiff resistance by the political and, above all, the military leadership. That explains why Gorbachev has not, contrary to general expectations, left Gromyko in charge of foreign policy and is keen to gain allies in the Soviet supreme command. It seems extremely doubtful whether he will succeed in this way in achieving perceptible success and, above all, success soon. The second option is more readily feasible in a single-party system in which totalitarian characteristics continue to prevail. Gorbachev said on 17 May 1985 in Leningrad that the Soviet economy basically needed an annual growth rate of over four per cent. In a rhetorical question that *Pravda* didn't print he made it clear that otherwise improvements in living standards would have to be forgone³². In reality he was hinting at the possibility of a decline in the standard of living. He must have realised that in such circumstances no substantial increase in labour productivity would be attainable.

Gorbachev equates the political importance of the task of stepping up the intensification of the economy with that of industrialisation as largely implemented by means of Stalin's "revolution from above". That indicates he might be prepared in certain circumstances to undertake measures to solve the problem. Gorbachev could only do so by means of a clash with large sections of the ruling senior bureaucracy, which he isn't yet strong enough to do. Another alternative would be far-reaching reforms amounting to a combination of planned and free market economy features in a "guided economy". The size of forces urging far-reaching reform in the Soviet Union is, however, small at present. Yet it increased during the interregnum, as can be inferred from the Novosibirsk study and other non-dissident sources. Besides, despite the continued weakness of reform forces the sociological preconditions for a policy of re-

32 Cf (E.) K(u)x, "Gorbatschew im Labyrinth der Sowjetwirtschaft," in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 28/29 June 1985

form are much more favourable today than they were under Khrushchev in destalinisation days.

5. Gorbachev's Foreign Policy Programme

In foreign policy Chernenko more keenly advocated abiding by the general policy line laid down at the XXVI CPSU party congress in 1981 than he did in respect of domestic affairs³³. In relations with the West he supported both continuation of "political dialogue" with the United States and continuation of the CSCE process.

In spring 1984 a power realignment in the Kremlin prompted him to adjust to the Gromyko line. Gromyko was not prepared to resume negotiations with the United States until "obstacles" in the shape of medium-range US missiles stationed in Western Europe were removed. He also, in agreement with the orthodox tendency in the Kremlin leadership, advocated a "rejection strategy" coupled with a discipline campaign in the Soviet hegemonial sphere and a revanchism campaign outside it. Representatives of this tendency evidently saw this strategy and tactics as the best means of stepping up domestic mobilisation to overcome economic difficulties while at the same continuing the arms race.

A further power realignment in autumn 1984 provided Chernenko, backed by Gorbachev, with an opportunity of resuming dialogue with the United States and pursuing a more flexible foreign policy line. This made it possible to reach agreement with the United States on fresh negotiations to deal with all sectors of nuclear armament, including the US Strategic Defence Initiative, in Geneva. Gorbachev attached great importance to these negotiations, as evidenced by the care he took to ensure they began on the date agreed, 14 March 1985, even though it happened to be the date of Chernenko's funeral.

Gorbachev made it clear in his 18 December 1984 speech to the House of Commons in London³⁴ that he preferred a more flexible foreign policy mainly for domestic reasons. He stressed that the Soviet Union needed "peace" to carry out the "grandiose creative plans" aimed at intensifying the economy and that "peace" furthered the cause of cooperation between East and West.

After he was elected CPSU general secretary Gorbachev advocated in all his speeches a reactivation of detente policy as pursued in the 1970s. At the same time he called the international political situation complicated and dangerous, saying any "improvement" called for deeds, not words. Yet Soviet proposals so far and the way the Soviet Union has conducted negotiations in Geneva have shown no signs of readiness to

³³ Cf Meissner (Footnote 1), *op cit*, p. 259 ff.
³⁴ *Pravda*, 19 December 1985

make verifiable concessions³⁵. This goes for the unilateral moratorium on the further stationing of medium-range missiles proclaimed on 7 April 1985 which had previously been proclaimed by Brezhnev yet not been practised. It also goes for Gorbachev's limited nuclear test moratorium of 29 July 1985, which isn't adequately verifiable. Given the present power position in the Soviet Union, concessions cannot be expected at the November 1985 Gorbachev-Reagan summit either. The most that can be hoped for is a degree of relaxation of tension in mutual relations.

For Gorbachev the Soviet Union is a "major world power" on a par with the United States. Like his predecessors, he works on the assumption of a bipolar structure of the power system giving priority to relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. But he seems better able to assess the importance of multipolar tendencies in world affairs. In particular, he more strongly emphasises the importance of Western Europe for Soviet foreign policy³⁶. Unlike Gromyko he seems prepared to see Western Europe as an independent factor regardless of relations with the United States. For him the Soviet Union, seen as an incarnation of Russia³⁷, is first and foremost a European power. He evidently believes, on the basis of what Europe has in common, in closer cooperation with the Western European states regardless of differences in social and political systems. In this sense he referred in London to Europe as "our common house", and he repeated this figure of speech in his 20 February 1985 election address³⁸. In a succession of state visits, starting with France, Gorbachev hopes to improve relations with Western Europe. With this aim in view he has also repeated the proposal to establish formal relations between the European Community and the CMEA³⁹. There is a contradiction between these bids for rapprochement in Europe and attempts to forge even closer links with Eastern European countries on the ground that "imperialism" plans "social revanche". This strange concept of "social revanchism", allegedly planned mainly by the United States, is combined with the spectre of German revanchism⁴⁰.

In his initial speeches as general secretary Gorbachev has insisted, as did his predecessors, on the priority to be enjoyed by relations with "fraternal socialist countries" in Soviet foreign policy. He has referred to the

35 For the Soviet attitude on arms control cf G. Wetzig, "Die Sowjetunion und die Rüstungskontrolle," in *Aussenpolitik*, vol 36, 1985, p. 25 ff.

36 For Soviet policy on Western Europe cf J. Van Oudenaren, "Die sowjetische Politik gegenüber Westeuropa. Einschätzungen von Entwicklungen im Atlantischen Bündnis," in *Europa-Archiv*, vol 40, 1985, p. 89 ff.

37 In a roadside debate between Gorbachev and people of Kiev screened on Soviet TV on 25 June 1985 Gorbachev twice used the word Russia for the Soviet Union.

38 *Pravda*, 21 February 1985. This sentence was cut from the version of the speech printed in *Neues Deutschland*, 21 February 1985.

39 For relations between the European Community and the Council for Mutual Economic Cooperation cf Axel Lebahn, "Die ökonomischen Kooperationsgrundsätze der KSZE und die Entwicklung von Beziehungen zwischen EG und RGW," in *Internationales Recht und Diplomatie*, vol 1977-1980, p. 201 ff. Documentation on the subject in the section entitled "Der Rat für Gegenseitige Wirtschaftshilfe, die sozialistische ökonomische Integration und die Beziehungen EG-RGW," *ibid*, p. 362 ff.

40 For the revanchism campaign against the Federal Republic of Germany cf F. Oldenburg, "Sowjetische Deutschland-Politik — von Breshnew zu Gorbatschow," in *Osteuropa*, vol 35, 1985, p. 311 ff.

increasingly important task of "the greatest possible perfecting and enrichment of cooperation, the development of comprehensive relations with fraternal socialist countries, the guarantee of their close collaboration in politics, economics, ideology, defence and other sectors and concern for an organic nexus between the national and international interests of all members of the great community"⁴¹. He has also stressed the need for the continued existence of the Warsaw Pact and implementation of the resolutions reached at the June 1984 Moscow summit conference of CMEA member-countries.

On 26 April 1985 a protocol signed at a summit conference in Warsaw attended by the Soviet leader renewed the Warsaw Treaty⁴². There were no textual amendments so the discrimination of the GDR evident in the original German text was not eliminated. The treaty as renewed will run for a further 20 years with a renewal option for 10 more. Both in his speech at the reception held to mark the renewal of the Warsaw Treaty and in later speeches Gorbachev called for more intensive cooperation between members of the Warsaw Pact and between Parties and states that formed part of the "socialist community". He also called for "consolidation of their unity and cohesion on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism". The Kremlin leaders clearly feel these objectives are threatened by growing tendencies toward pluralism and centrifugalism in the "socialist community"⁴³ that as they see it are based on "revisionist" ideas.

In a fundamental article in *Pravda*, 21 June 1985, entitled "The Leading Factor in the International Revolutionary Process" and couched in terms in keeping with the Brezhnev Doctrine the "interests of world socialism" are said to need defending on the basis of the principles of proletarian and socialist internationalism, in other words, with due regard for Soviet hegemony. In foreign policy "the course agreed" must be "unshakably maintained". Bids to upset cohesion must, it is said, "on no account be tolerated" and are to be regarded as "treason". "National models of socialism" are said to be used by the class enemy as sophisticated means of dividing the unity of the "socialist community" and fanning the flames of Russophobia and hostility toward the Soviet Union. "Stricter yardsticks of alliance loyalty" were heralded and aimed mainly at Soviet satellites that had sought during the interregnum to extend their foreign policy leeway, such as Rumania, Hungary, the GDR and, to a limited extent, even Bulgaria. They were also aimed at Cuba, whose relations with the Soviet Union show signs of tension. Emphasis at the same time on "so-

⁴¹ *Pravda*, 24 March 1985

⁴² Verbatim in *Pravda*, 26 April 1985

⁴³ For bids for autonomy in Eastern Central and South-East Europe cf R. Löwenthal, B. Meissner (eds.), *Der Sowjetblock zwischen Vormachtkontrolle und Autonomie*, Cologne 1984, and Ch. Gati, "Soviet Imperium", in *Problems of Communism*, March-April 1985, p. 73 ff.

cialist legitimacy” and, above all, single-party rule along Soviet communist lines was mainly intended as a warning to Poland and Czechoslovakia, while condemnation of deviation from a socialist economic system on the Soviet model was mainly levelled at Hungary.

It is striking that this article, signed Vladimirov, drew a clearer distinction than was previously customary in the Soviet Union between the “socialist community” and the “socialist international system”⁴⁴. The “socialist community”, meaning the Soviet-led “camp”, is described as the “nucleus” of the “socialist international system”. “Socialist states” that do not form part of this nucleus are seen as part of the “socialist international system”. Gorbachev plans to forge closer links with them and is particularly interested in improving relations with China, which is the only one of these countries to be specially mentioned in the *Pravda* article. He has expressed a desire for a “serious improvement” in Soviet-Chinese relations on several occasions. In his 27 June 1985 Dnepropetrovsk speech he referred to the aim of “making an active contribution toward totally ending the negative phase in Soviet-Chinese relations that erected many artificial barriers”⁴⁵. In the political context it is no longer a matter of “artificial barriers”, as shown by the three conditions the Chinese lay down for a normalisation of political relations. By stepping up the fighting in Afghanistan, by backing the Vietnamese offensive against resistance forces in Kampuchea and by further reinforcement of its armed forces in Asia the Kremlin has raised existing barriers even higher⁴⁶. During the visit of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to the Soviet Union Gorbachev resurrected, in an after-dinner speech on 21 May 1985⁴⁷, the idea of a Conference on Security in Asia (CSA)⁴⁸ about which little had been heard since the end of the Brezhnev era. It is doubtful whether China, which earlier saw the proposal as a Soviet bid to encircle it, takes a more favourable view of the concept today. At the same time as advocating the CSA the Soviet leader reaffirmed the proposal, advocated for years by the Soviet Union, to transform the Indian Ocean into a “zone of peace”.

During the visit of the Vietnamese Communist leader Le Duan, Gorbachev reiterated in a 28 June 1985 after-dinner speech⁴⁹ the idea of an “all-Asian forum” and advocated not only the “drafting of confidence-building measures in the Far East” but also a “convention on recip-

44 For these two key concepts cf. B. Meissner, “Die Außenpolitik der Sowjetunion — Grundlagen und Strategien,” in K. Kaiser, H.-P. Schwarz (eds.), *Weltpolitik. Strukturen — Akteure — Perspektiven*, published by the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn 1985, p. 441 ff.

45 *Pravda*, 28 June 1985

46 Cf. D. Heinzig, “Abkühlung zwischen Moskau und Peking,” in *Europa-Archiv*, vol 39, 1984, p. 675 ff.

47 *Pravda*, 22 May 1985

48 Cf. D. Braun, J. Glaubitz, “Kollektive Sicherheit als Konzept sowjetischer Asien-Politik,” in *Europa-Archiv*, vol 29, 1974, p. 22 ff, and E. Schneider, “Nach der KSZE das KSA? Kollektives Sicherheitssystem als Grundmuster sowjetischer Asienpolitik,” in *Berichte des BJOst*, 1976, No. 41.

49 *Pravda*, 29 June 1985

rocal non-aggression and renunciation of force in relations between the states of Asia and the Pacific region". Progress toward implementation of these proposals would only appear conceivable if Gorbachev were to summon the strength to end the Afghan adventure, which is an extremely expensive venture for the Soviet Union⁵⁰. That would also be important for an improvement in relations between the Soviet Union and Japan, to which Gorbachev evidently attaches greater importance than Gromyko. In the global context too Afghanistan remains a touchstone of the Soviet Union's true desire for peace.

In the Middle East, where it continues to be interested in a Middle East conference, the Soviet Union shows greater flexibility⁵¹. Its relationship towards the war between Iran and Iraq, in which it remains neutral, is ambivalent. Gorbachev may have pledged continued Soviet support for "liberated countries" in the Third World⁵², but he has made no special mention of "socialist-oriented states". His greatest interest seems to be in maintaining unrest in the Caribbean and Central America, with Nicaragua and Cuba, in America's back yard⁵³ as a bargaining counter. His restraint toward Third World countries other than those more closely associated with Soviet hegemony and the Soviet sphere of interest indicates priority for a continental strategy related to the Eurasian region that is more marked in his approach than in that of either Andropov or Chernenko⁵⁴. In his 18 December 1984 London speech Gorbachev noted that a country's foreign policy could not be seen as separate and distinct from its domestic affairs, socio-economic objectives and requirements. For the interdependence of domestic and foreign policy indicated in this comment the corresponding passages in the 21 June 1985 *Pravda* article are of importance. They are as adamant in rejecting any idea of introducing "free market" features and enlarging the private sector of the economy as they are in ruling out any limitation on one-party rule. They make it clear that the present Kremlin leadership plans to retain the centralist, bureaucratic system based on state ownership. That means the totalitarian characteristics of one-party rule will remain until further notice under Gorbachev. So Soviet foreign policy remains bloc-oriented in terms of both international revolutionary and national imperial objectives.

50 For the situation in Afghanistan cf. A. Hyman, "Afghanistan unter sowjetischer Besatzung," in *Europa-Archiv*, vol 39, 1984, p. 741 ff.

51 Cf. R. Davydov, "Blizhnyj Vostok: potencial sovetskikh iniciativ" (The Middle East: Potential for Soviet Initiatives), in *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn*, 1984, No. 10, p. 116 ff, and V. Blikhin, "Blizhnennu Vostoku nuzhen mir" (The Middle East needs Peace), in *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn*, 1984, No. 11, p. 84 ff.

52 For Soviet policy toward developing countries cf. M. Libal, "Interessen und Ideologie in der Dritten Welt — Politik der Sowjetunion," in *Europa-Archiv*, vol 40, 1985, p. 195 ff.

53 Cf. U. Fanger, "Die Krisenzone des mittelamerikanisch-karibischen Raumes," in K. Kaiser, H.-P. Schwarz (Footnote 45), op cit, p. 709 ff.

54 Cf. Meissner, in K. Kaiser, H.-P. Schwarz (Footnote 45), op cit, p. 452 ff.

DRAFT

DRAFT

Your editorial, "Not Only Jews," (New Republic, April 8, 1985), ~~which~~ expressed an admirable concern for the human rights of all Soviet citizens. ^{Unfortunately, it} also misrepresents ~~the intent and character of the March 5 Washington Post advertisement~~ ^{about Soviet Jews} ~~which we endorsed, that calls for Soviet Jewish emigration.~~

Why should a Jewish organization devote such attention to the emigration of Soviet Jews? As you point out, Soviet Jews, as a group, have been singled out for stereotyping, scapegoating, discrimination in employment and education, and denial of religious rights. This clearly makes Jewish emigration morally desirable. But why focus on ~~the~~ the right of Jews to leave, ^{and not the} ~~the~~ "rescue" of others?

~~There are two reasons for this. In the first place,~~ Soviet Jews want to leave, and other groups do not. ~~The~~ Crimean Tatar activists want to return to the Crimea from which

2

~~xxx~~ they were banished in 1943; Ukrainian dissidents have called
chanced cultural rights, some for
for Ukrainian ~~i~~dependence from the Soviet Union. Regardless

of how one would weigh these various claims, is it ~~xx~~ "naive"

to believe, as you suggest, that the Soviet Union will be more

willing to permit Soviet Jews to leave than to ~~free~~ ^{let go of} the

Ukraine? ^{your} ^{once} ~~By~~ referring to Soviet Moslems ~~you~~ probably

~~are calling for Soviet abandonment of atheistic and anti~~
^{relates to}

religious teaching among Moslems. ~~This is a worthy goal--~~
^{Having the Soviet abandon anti-religious}

teaching is a worthy goal--

but is it in the power ~~the~~ of any foreign government, let alone

Jewish organizations, to alter ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{this Soviet} ~~Marxist~~ doctrine? ~~and~~

~~Soviet internal practices?~~ ^{Success in} Efforts on ~~the~~ behalf of victims

of human rights violations ~~succeed~~ ^{depends} ~~relies~~ ^(political, as well as moral.) on correct judgement.

~~not only of what is right, but of what is possible~~

Does this mean that one should pursue only "practical"

human rights goals, and conduct "human rights transactions

exclusively for Jews", as you state. Of course not. A

Jewish organization's ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ^{basic purpose} raison d'etre is to assist Jews. But it has always been our conviction that human rights are indivisible. ~~This is why,~~ throughout our organization's history, we have worked to promote human rights ~~concepts~~ concepts--such as emigration, not only for Jews, but ~~for~~ for all ~~peoples~~ peoples, for religious freedom, and for the right to know one's human rights, ~~and the teaching of human rights in~~ ~~the United States, Europe, and South Africa~~ America.

^{if} / We have been concerned ~~for~~ ^{about} Soviet Jews, but we have ~~also~~ also endeavored to assist Soviet Pentecostals, black South Africans, ^{blacks} famine-stricken Africans, Vietnamese "boat people", and the victims of Khmer Rouge massacre.

^{Your} ~~The suggestion made in your editorial~~ that Jewish organizations ^{are trying to} "exchange Jews for a renewal or detente" is equally inaccurate. Such a trade is neither desirable nor possible. ^{The} Soviet ^{Union's} global ambitions, ^{its} military build-up, and ^{its} destabilizing activities in various regions of the world--

To be sure,

~~Yet is not~~ the absence of citizen participation in the

making of ~~foreign policy~~ Soviet ~~and~~ foreign policy, and

~~the presence of such participation in the United States--~~ ^{planning easier} ^{participation in the United States ~~under~~ makes such planning harder.}

But isn't this one the the "grave" political and philosophical

differences between ~~us and the~~ us and the

Soviets that ^{we} ~~you~~ wish to retain?





THE NEW REPUBLIC

APRIL 8, 1985

NOT ONLY JEWS

In Howard Fast's *The Naked God*, a memoir of his disenchantment with Communism, there is a revealing vignette. Whenever Fast met his friend, the high Soviet cultural apparatchik, at international assemblies of fellow-travelers, he would ask about other friends, some Yiddish writers in Moscow. The apparatchik invariably would report that they were in good health and good cheer. Fast took this as conclusive evidence that widespread fears about Soviet anti-Semitism were unfounded. Then Fast found out that his friends were all dead, murdered—despite the festival airs they wrote for Stalin—during a far-reaching campaign against “rootless cosmopolitans” and Zionists. Fast confronted a *Pravda* correspondent, demanding to know why he had been deceived. The Russian impatiently responded: “Why do you make so much of the Jews? Jews! Jews! That is all we hear from you! Do you think Stalin murdered no one but Jews?”

At last a Soviet official was telling the truth. And Stalin's successor regimes also have persecuted not only Jews, but Christians and Moslems and democrats and poets and others who have tried to find some private or communal refuge in an otherwise wholly ideologized tyranny. Not to mention the generalized oppression of all its citizens that is the essence of the Soviet system. It is important for Americans, and American Jews in particular, to keep the *Pravda* correspondent's maxim in mind.

It's true that among all the oppressed groups in the Soviet Union, the Jews have been inordinately singled out, stereotyped, and scapegoated, and been made targets of propaganda, prosecution, and psychiatric imprisonment. The Jewish obsession seems intrinsic to both Russia and Marxism; the animus predates the revolution, but it has persisted nearly 70 years into Communist rule. The Hebrew language is illegal, its teachers criminally prosecuted and jailed. No religion is so systematically kept from practicing its customs and perpetuating its own learning and rituals. The individual Jew now has less access to education and employment than at any point since 1917; the notorious quotas of Czarist times have been reinstated, if anything more harshly. A Jew's roots may go

back hundreds of years in what is now Soviet territory, but still the Jew is “alien” and labeled as much right on his or her internal passport.

It is only natural, then, that Jews outside the Soviet Union and true devotees of human rights everywhere should—even while trying to secure for Jews whatever sparse rights are vouchsafed other Soviet citizens—also secure for them the right to leave. Hence the agitation supporting the upward of 500,000 souls—from one-quarter to one-third of Russian Jewry—who want desperately to go. It is also only natural that activists for Soviet Jewry should want to seize whatever opportunity is provided by the present change in the Soviet leadership to wrest some Jews from their captivity.

But in the frantic grasping for good signs about the new leadership, which looks to us much like the old, many of these well-meaning people are making themselves look foolish. And some are doing more than what is natural and more than what is decent. They are offering Mikhail Gorbachev a deal: the emigration of Jews in exchange for U.S. trade, an exchange of Jews for a renewal of détente. Take this advertisement in the March 5 *Washington Post* (a strange place to communicate with the Moscow leadership):

Last year was bad for Soviet Jews. Less than 900 were allowed to leave. . . . Nevertheless, we believe many people in this country would be responsive to positive changes, especially in your emigration policy. Why should emigration continue to be a barrier to improved trade and investment relations, and to expanded cultural and scientific exchange?

Sponsored by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry in association with the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the document reflects views gaining currency in Jewish leadership circles. It also seems to express publicly the gist of private diplomacy being carried on between Soviet and Jewish leaders.

Well maybe this is good for the Jews of Russia, though maybe not. But what about the Soviet citizens whose rescue is not a part of the proposed transaction? What about

those left in Russia for whom no one speaks? The National Council of Churches may be indifferent to the fate of Baptists and Evangelicals and Jehovah's Witnesses, but that is no reason for others to be. Likewise, the Islamic regimes have turned their backs on 60 million Moslem brethren in Soviet Asia, so as not to jeopardize their anti-Israel alliance with Moscow, but that's no reason for others to turn their backs as well. And just because no one cares for the dozens of endangered ethnic and national groups submerged under Soviet rule—truly captive nations, these, with no diaspora to invoke their destiny in world capitals—this doesn't justify a human rights transaction made exclusively for Jews.

What would an expanded cultural exchange look like if it were to be accompanied by a stream of departing Russian Jews and a torrent of Russian bombs over Afghanistan? And how would the Jewish organizations feel if the Soviets were to compensate the Arabs for the new Russian Jews arrived in Israel with an even more mischievous Middle Eastern policy?

This proposed arrangement is not just morally obtuse. It's politically obtuse, too. It suggests in the grossest possible way what anti-Semites have always charged: that Jews care only about Jews. This is not to insist on a spurious universalist solidarity. But there are some narrow goals that are just too narrow. It is not even clear how realistic they are. Could the Soviets be trusted to honor such a bargain over the long haul? And if they don't, would the Jewish organizations then be back to public opinion and to Congress to try to cancel the arrangement? Jewish organizations have played a key role, we believe rightly, in pressing for a firmer policy toward the Soviet Union. But that firmer policy was intended as a response to a whole series of Soviet provocations, of which the oppression of the Jews is but one.

There is also something quite haughty in Jewish organizations purporting to be able to deliver on these incentives to Moscow. We don't understand why these organizations would want Gorbachev to think they can deliver. It is an anti-Semitic fantasy, now widely believed in the Communist and Third Worlds, that the key to American policy is Jewish opinion.

Like almost everybody else in American society, Jews have plural social identities. The fears of certain American Jewish organizations (the American Jewish Congress, for example, in a recent report) that the Jews of America have become too single-minded in their political concern about Israel are misplaced; it's just not so. But those Jewish leaders who have set out to strike bargains with the Soviet Union represent precisely that kind of single-mindedness. Indeed, they combine the worst features of special-interest politics with the most naive features of liberal foreign policy. It is difficult enough to make foreign policy in a democracy without having various groups within it (the Jews are not the only sinners in this regard) set out to do their diplomacy for themselves. The American contest with the Soviet Union, political and philosophical, is a grave matter, and it is bigger than them all.

NOTEBOOK

□ THE ABORTION DEBATE has been heavily influenced by the pro-life movie *The Silent Scream*. (See "Right-to-Life Porn" by Jefferson Morley, March 25.) Now it turns out that the film's evidence is flawed. "CBS Morning News" showed the sonogram last week to five qualified obstetricians. They all denied that a 12-week-old fetus could feel pain, react to the intrusion of the suction tube, or open its mouth to "scream." Their most significant point was that, when the film claims the fetus is starting to struggle, it is actually only showing the speeding up of the film. One of the doctors said: "Any of us could show you the same image in a fetus who is not being aborted." If the anti-abortion case was as clear-cut as its publicists say, they wouldn't have to distort the evidence to make their point.

□ PHOTO FINISH: There's a fitting epilogue to our recent press story about the petty removal of Leslie Gelb's portrait from the State Department office where Gelb served as director of Politico-Military Affairs during the Carter administration. Secretary of State George Shultz was asked to comment on the episode and he stated the obvious truth: that Mr. Gelb, the national security correspondent for *The New York Times*, "is an able journalist and a patriotic person." Now all that remains is for Shultz to tell the current occupant of Gelb's former office, Lt. Gen. John Chain, to kindly put Gelb's picture back up.

□ HARVARD MAGAZINE, the alumni bimonthly, knows what's really at stake in the Star Wars debate. In the March-April issue, the "Money Matters" column reports on how to get rich off the Strategic Defense Initiative. "The whole effort is very bullish for the Department of Defense's very high-speed integrated circuit effort, of which Texas Instruments is a leader," according to stock analysts. And don't despair if Congress seemingly votes down the program. "Approval for a program may involve as many as eighteen separate stages. . . . The press often exaggerates the importance of one of these decisions, and investors overreact to the bad news . . . over time the constituency that develops around an established program makes it very hard for Congress to abandon." How true. We say, sell your arms control futures.

□ MORE MEDLEY: At a recent Aspen Institute conclave, "The World: 1985 and Beyond," J. William Medley, author of the syndicated column "Conventional Wisdom," offered this timely point: "We need not succumb to wishful thinking about the true nature of the Soviet system to welcome Gorbachev's entrance onto the stage of world history. Once again force of personality—the firm handshake, the pretty and poised wife—reminds us that all of us on this planet are human. Like his predecessors, Gorbachev arrives dressed in the gray cloth of monolithic Marxist-Leninism. But his is a brighter gray, and with a more

The Task

A VOICE OF CHRISTIAN-JEWISH CONCERN



FOCUS ANTI-SEMITISM

p.1-2 A Strange Solidarity; USSR Anti-Zionist Committee chides USA for anti-Semitic incidents here, yet remains mute about the anti-Semitic attacks on YULI EDELSHTEIN and other Soviet Jews, smears in the Soviet media or hatred spawned by Soviet UN allies. Congressman Biaggi (202-225-2464) sponsors HR 775 to penalize "Hate Crimes in the USA". When will the Kremlin take similar steps?

p-3-6 Test your own knowledge of Anti-Semitism. (Our thanks to the Embassy of Israel for providing the copies).

p-7-8 Babette Wampold traces the spread of Anti-Semitism in the USSR for the Alabama Journal.

Radio Moscow has been nominated for the "Chutzpah Above and Beyond the Call of Duty" prize for 1985 by Adam Simms of the American Jewish Committee. On 2/26/85 Radio Moscow broadcast the following: "The Soviet Public Anti-Zionist Committee has expressed concern at a trend toward greater anti-Semitism in the USA. In a message the Committee sent to the US Congress, it said that, according to the press, Jewish people and organizations suffered as a result of vandalism or violence on 715 occasions last year. The Soviet Committee called on the American legislators to do everything in their power to check the growth of anti-Semitism, incompatible with civilized society, and guarantee all American citizens their human rights and personal safety."

YULI EDELSHTEIN

In Edelshtein's case, it was admitted by the prosecution that three men (whom Edelshtein was able to identify as KGB officers) were not included on the search warrant; when the police inspector was asked why their names did not appear on the official warrant, his answer was that it was an oversight, and due to his inexperience.

Asked what the searchers were looking for, his answer was "everything". The police officer's claim was that Edelshtein had taken a matchbox from his jeans pocket, lit the Shabbat candles, then placed the matchbox on a window sill. The inspector retrieved the matchbox, opened it and found that it contained some sort of a "stone". The search was forthwith called off. YULI was charged and it was only some days later that the experts identified the "stone" was opium.

The defence counsel was able to prove conclusively:

1. There was no window sill in the room.
2. That had there indeed been opium in the room, both Juli and his wife had every opportunity of flushing it down the toilet.
3. Yuli was wearing jeans so tight that there was no room for a bulky matchbox.

In addition to all the above, there was one vital piece of evidence which Yuli pointed out, and every Jew in the world will understand. It is the wife who lights the Shabbat candles, not the husband.

JUSSR #7 2/14/85

In Leningrad, PROF. IVAN MARTINOV, a non-Jew who has passionately protested official anti-Semitism, has been sentenced after a three-day trial to 1½ yrs probation for "falsely signing an employment voucher," the SSSJ and LICSIJ said.

Activist LEONID KELBERT, a former movie producer, was jailed by police for several hours after he left the courthouse where he testified on Martinov's behalf.

SSSJ 1/18/85

UN head denounces Jews drink blood lie

NEW YORK — U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar told the World Jewish Congress that the anti-Semitic diatribe of the Saudi representative at a U.N. seminar was "racist, shameful, and totally unacceptable."

Israel Singer, WJC executive director, and Elan Steinberg, its U.N. Representative, were told by the Secretary-General of his concern about the remarks of Dr. Maouf Dawalibi, the Saudi Representative at the U.N. Seminar on Religious Tolerance in Geneva that the Talmud says that "if a Jew does not drink every year the blood of a non-Jewish man, then he will be damned for eternity."

At the Geneva Seminar, the Representative of the World Jewish Congress and the B'nai B'rith, Daniel Lack, took the floor to describe Dawalibi's statement as "one of the most nauseating archetypal, anti-Semitic diatribes it has been my misfortune to hear in almost 20 years attendance at meetings of U.N. bodies."

Singer and Steinberg informed the Secretary-General of documentation showing that Dawalibi was a close associate of Hajj Amin Al Hussein, the late Mufti of Jerusalem, who worked for Hitler in World War II.

The WJCongress did not explain why the Cuellar waited for their remonstrance to denounce the outrageous canard.



January 30, 1985 Jewish Post and Opinion Page 12

Printed in lurid colors, a spider spins its evil "Zionist" web linking the CIA, huge amounts of dollars, capitalist banks and Congress, as one of the explicit anti-Jewish cartoons in the recent Kremlin book, "The Poison of Zionism", published in 200,000 copies and obtained by the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry.

Photo credit

Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

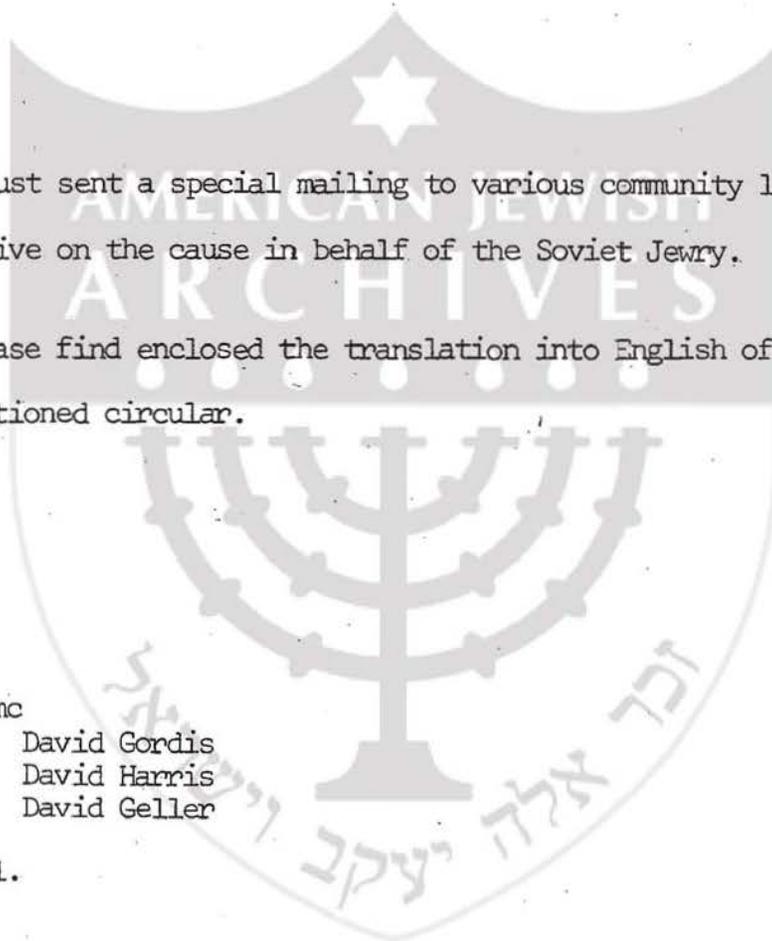
date April 15, 1985
to Marc Tanenbaum
from Jacobo Kovadloff 
subject

I just sent a special mailing to various community leaders active on the cause in behalf of the Soviet Jewry.

Please find enclosed the translation into English of the above mentioned circular.

JK/mc
cc: David Gordis
David Harris
David Geller

encl.



(Transl. from the Spanish)

DATE: April 9, 1985
TO: South American Committees on the Rights of Jews in the USSR
FROM: Jacobo Kovadloff, Director, South American Affairs and
Spanish Media
SUBJECT: Forwarding material on Soviet Jewry

In connection with the enclosed material on Soviet Jewry, I should like to make some comments which we believe will benefit communication between us, and, consequently, the common task in which we are engaged.

Our material has been addressed to the central bodies representing the Jewish community in every country. Should we continue to do the same in future, or should the material be addressed to specific committees? I would appreciate your reply together with the necessary data (name and address).

We continually receive individual requests for additional copies of this material. It is, however, impossible for us to make further additions to the list of recipients, for technical and financial reasons. We have replied to every request by referring it to the proper committees or central bodies. Therefore, please let us know whether the material has been useful and interesting, whether photocopies were distributed to committee members, and whether translations were made eventually.

Our material has included not only information published by the A.J.C. in English and Spanish, but also bulletins issued by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and other groups in the U.S., as well as pamphlets and press clippings. We started this service four years ago, because we felt you should be kept up-to-date on the many facets of this endeavor here in the U.S., and also because this could possibly lead to similar action taken in your country, adapted to local conditions.

It is no less important for us to be informed of your own efforts in this connection. Occasionally, we do receive some information. Therefore, not only as a matter of reciprocity, but in order to achieve better coordination, we would appreciate receiving copies of ^{your/}resolutions, correspondence, bulletins, editorials and press clippings, miscellaneous material, etc. related to this common task.

We have ongoing contact with the diplomatic representatives of your country to the U.N. and in Washington in order to motivate and enlighten them on the subject. This would be strongly reinforced if we could refer to steps taken in your own country.

Thus, recent interviews with the embassies of Peru, Uruguay, and Argentina, initiated by the National Conference, are discussed in the enclosed two memoranda written by my colleague, David Harris. Furthermore, all Spanish-language information is forwarded by me to the Hispanic Press and to leaders of Latin American groups in the U.S.

Therefore, we should also like to have the names of national committee members and their function as representatives on the committees, as well as on the national level.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely,



Encs.
c.c.:

Asociación Sociedad Israelita del Perú
Comité Representativo de la Comunidad Israelita - Chile
Comité Uruguayo pro Derechos Judíos Soviéticos
Congreso Judío Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires
D.A.I.A., Buenos Aires
Federacao Israelita do Estado de Sao Paulo
Federacao Israelita do Rio de Janeiro

(Jewish Community Center of Peru
(Representative Committee of Jewish Community, Chile
(Uruguayan Committee on the Rights of Soviet Jewry
(Latin American Jewish Congress, Buenos Aires
(Delegation of Jewish Associations of Argentina, Buenos Aires
(Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo
(Jewish Federation of Rio de Janeiro)

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date Abril 12, 1985

to A los Comités Sudamericanos pro Derechos de los Judíos en la URSS

from Jacobo Kovadloff, Director para Asuntos Sudamericanos y Medios en Español

subject envío de materiales re. judaísmo soviético

Hago propicia la oportunidad de un nuevo despacho de la referencia, para formular algunas consideraciones que, en nuestra opinión, nos ayudarán recíprocamente a implementar nuestra comunicación y, como resultado, también la acción común en que estamos empeñados por igual.

Nuestros envíos son dirigidos a las entidades centrales representativas de las comunidades judías de cada país. ¿Debemos seguir haciéndolo así en el futuro o conviene remitirlos a los comités específicos?. Agradecería vuestra respuesta y los datos necesarios (nombre y dirección).

Recibimos constantemente requerimientos individuales para que enviemos copias de esos materiales. Nos es imposible ampliar la lista de envíos por razones técnicas y materiales. Hemos respondido a cada pedido refiriéndolos a los propios comités o entidades centrales. En consecuencia mucho apreciaremos saber de ustedes si los materiales son de vuestra utilidad e interés, si se distribuyen fotocopados entre los miembros de los comités, y eventualmente si son traducidos.

Por nuestra parte, reitero, nuestros envíos incluyen no sólo las informaciones del A.J.C., en inglés y en español, sino también los boletines de la National Conference on Soviet Jewry, de otros grupos de este país, folletos y recortes de prensa. Cuando iniciamos este servicio, cuatro años atrás, nos movió el deseo de informarles sobre el quehacer múltiple que se cumple aquí en esta acción específica y eventualmente estimular las actividades que resulten apropiadas para readaptar a cada uno de nuestros países.

No menos importante nos resulta al mismo tiempo conocer vuestras propias acciones. Esporadicamente nos enteramos de ellas. No sólo por un principio de reciprocidad, sino porque de ello resulta de hecho una mayor coordinación, les quedaremos muy reconocidos si nos pueden hacer llegar a vuestra mejor comodidad, copias de vuestra resoluciones, correspondencia, boletines, editoriales e informaciones de prensa, publicaciones varias, etc., etc., relacionadas con nuestra común preocupación.

Nuestro permanente contacto con los representantes diplomáticos de vuestros países ante las N.U. y en Washington, para motivarlos e ilustrarlos sobre el tema, se verá muy facilitada haciendo referencia a las actividades cumplidas en sus propios países.

Tal lo acontecido recientemente en entrevistas que mantuviéramos con las embajadas del Perú, Uruguay y Argentina, en una movilización convocada por la National Conference y de la que dá cuenta los dos memorandums de mi colega David

Harris que adjunto a la presente. Además, toda información en idioma español la derivo a la prensa hispana y a los dirigentes de los grupos latinoamericanos en los EE.UU.

Por ello también y si fuera posible, nos gustaría conocer quiénes integran cada uno de los comités nacionales y la representatividad que ejercen en ellos y en el quehacer nacional.

Quedo al aguardo de vuestra respuesta. Mi anticipado reconocimiento y cordial saludo.



JK:ar

Adjs.

- cc: Asociación Sociedad Israelita del Perú
Comité Representativo de la Comunidad Israelita - Chile
Comité Uruguayo pro Derechos Judíos Soviéticos
Congreso Judío Latinoamericano - Buenos Aires
D.A.I.A. - Buenos Aires
Federacao Israelita do Estado de Sao Paulo
Federacao Israelita do Río De Janeiro

85-590-056

H068

How They Keep the Faith Behind the Iron Curtain

By BEVERLY BEYETTE, Times Staff Writer

Associated Press

They came together, Christians and Jews, to state the plight of the religious faithful living behind the Iron Curtain. They told of incarcerations in mental hospitals, of disappearances, of destruction of houses of worship, of open-end sentences in labor camps.

Moderator Alan Mittleman of the sponsoring National Inter-religious Task Force on Soviet Jewry noted that the hearing last week at Loyola Marymount University took place on Holocaust Remembrance Day, an appropriate occasion, he said, on which to be reminded of the threat posed by totalitarian societies.

It also took place during a time of heightened optimism for a thaw between the United States and the Soviet Union and its new leader, Mikhail S. Gorbachev.

But if any of the participants in this hearing on religious freedom, titled "Culture and Community: The Struggle for Religious Liberty in the U.S.S.R.," had been harboring hopes for detente, those were dashed quickly by speaker Yuri Yarim-Agaev, a Soviet physicist exiled in 1980 for dissident activities and now working in the Bay Area.

"Nothing has changed in the area of human rights," Yarim-Agaev said. "Nothing has improved since Gorbachev came to power." He spoke of "new

waves of repression" against Muslims and Jews, of clamp-downs on communication with political prisoners.

The hearing, held in cooperation with the American Jewish Committee, Los Angeles Chapter, and the Los Angeles Inter-religious Coalition on Soviet Jewry, was to gather testimony for submission next month in Ottawa to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The commission, mandated by the Helsinki Accords in 1975, monitors compliance by the Soviet Union and other participating nations with the agreements they signed on human rights and freedoms.



Presenters at Loyola Marymount included, in addition to Yarim-Agaev, Kent R. Hill, associate professor of history at Seattle Pacific University and a



MICHAEL EDWARDS / Los Angeles Times

Taking part in hearing on religious freedom in Soviet Union were Kent Hill, left, Yuri Yarim-Agaev and Olga Stacevich.

participant in emigration arrangements for the "Siberian Seven," Pentecostals who spent almost five years in de facto asylum in the American Embassy in Moscow before being permitted to emigrate to the West in mid-1983; Edward Robin of Los Angeles, vice chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry; Ginte Damusis, associate director, Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Brooklyn, N.Y., and Olga Stacevich, the Russian-born editor of *The Samizdat Bulletin*, San Mateo.

Hill touched off a provocative debate when he said the National Council of Churches has done a disservice to Christians in the Soviet Union by "buying the Soviet line" as handed them by official Soviet church leaders, that things will only get worse if protests are made, whereas the truth, Hill said, is that speaking out protects the dissidents.

Remarks Spark Anger

His remarks angered the Rev. Eugene Boutilier, executive director of the Southern California Ecumenical Council and a member of the panel of questioners. Boutilier

convinced an important, valid strategy is to develop a working relationship with the existing above-ground religious institutions, help them get concessions, help them grow and survive."

But, Boutilier said, "When (Hill) accuses the whole ecumenical leadership worldwide of being Communist dupes. . ."

What is needed, he said, is to "walk a tight line," putting the pressure on without embarrassing anyone—neither collaborating completely nor risking the chance that the church could be "wiped out."

During the three-hour hearing, part of moderator Mittleman's goal of "increased sensitivity (as Christians and Jews) to each others' concerns" appeared to be achieved.

The plight of Jews in the Soviet Union was described by Robin, who explained their unique position in light of "the national characterization the Soviets place upon Jews"—including identifying them as Jews on internal passports—and of the Soviets' refusal to recognize Hebrew as the Jewish language.

said, "I do not agree at all" if the inference is that the council does not consider religious oppression a serious concern, and, he added, "it's slanderous to say so."

Later, in an interview, both men explained their positions. "He missed my point," Hill said, which was that "the National Council of Churches has failed to support effectively Christians behind the Iron Curtain. They've allowed their relationship with registered church leaders to silence them. They mistakenly believe that they would hurt Russian Christians if they spoke up on their behalf."

Hill said that while some of the registered Soviet leaders are "dedicated Christians who've made a tactical decision to accommodate" and others "are, in fact, working for the KGB," both speak in the same voice. One of the former, Hill said, had told him, "You don't do us any favor when you don't ask hard questions."

Boutilier said he did not question that "there are severe, awful, restrictive anti-religious activities" in the Soviet Union, but, he said, "you have to find folks with whom to work and listen to them. . . I'm

Unique Position

He cited other factors that make them unique among religious groups: the existence of Israel as the bedrock of the Jewish emigration movement and the resulting national-international connection and "historic anti-Semitism" pre-dating the revolution.

Despite increasing pressures on Soviet Jews, Robin said, he found there "a tremendous renaissance of Jewish life and culture," focused on activities such as clandestine Hebrew classes and keeping of kosher kitchens, because group activity is "severely circumscribed."

No official statistics are available, Robin said, but educated estimates place the number of synagogues in the Soviet Union today at 74, compared to more than 1,000 in 1926, two years after Joseph Stalin came to power. That, he noted, is only one for every 30,000 to 35,000 Jews, but, he added, "We know that some private congregations have sprung up." There is only one seminary for rabbis behind the Iron Curtain, in Budapest.



Rev. Eugene Boutilier is director of Ecumenical Council.



MICHAEL EDWARDS / Los Angeles Times
Sister Ann Gillen of national Task Force on Soviet Jewry.

Since 1983, Robin said, "emigration (of Jews) is at a virtual standstill." Fewer than 1,000 emigrated to Israel in 1984, whereas in 1979, the year of greatest emigration, there were 51,000. In 1985, there have been 77 emigrations.

Attacks on Jews

Robin spoke of "accelerating" attacks on Jews in an effort "to eradicate their culture and religious activities and identity . . . the most serious harassment since the existence of Soviet Jews as a movement became known in the early 1960s."

"I think our main job in America is to keep people here sober-minded about the Soviet Union" during a time when there is the temptation to view Gorbachev's presidency as the opening of an era of improved relationships, Yarim-Agaev said. "The change in Soviet leadership is not important," he said, nor is the "change in rhetoric," nor are "important international documents signed by the Soviet Union."

As a member of the Moscow Helsinki Group, which was disbanded in 1982 after most of its members, including Anatoly Scharansky, were either exiled or imprisoned, Yarim-Agaev helped collect information on such things as restrictions on religious, cultural and educational activities, numbers of prisoners of conscience and psychiatric abuses of prisoners.

"In all those areas," he said, "the situation in the Soviet Union is worsening."

As a "symbolic gesture," he said, the Gorbachev regime might permit emigration of several thousand Jews and "even release several famous dissidents."

Yarim-Agaev said the Soviets are not only in economic trouble but are "really quite sensitive to Western public opinion." In view of that, he asked, why settle for the release of three or four dissidents when, if the United States is patient, the Soviets "would release much more people."

A member of the questioning panel asked, "What do the Soviets gain by keeping people in?"

Yarim-Agaev smiled and said, "Members of the Politburo would emigrate if they could get permission."

Required to Register

The status of Protestants in the Soviet Union—most of whom are either Pentecostals or Baptists—was told by Kent Hill. He noted that, ironically, the Soviet constitution specifically permits both religious worship and the right to spread anti-religious propaganda. Protestants, like Catholics, are required to register and those who comply "may be discriminated against in terms of jobs," Hill said, "but they're not going to be rounded up and put in prison."

It is among those who refuse to register, often because they are adamant about their children having a Christian upbringing and in the Soviet Union "you not allowed to bring your children to church," that "you find the prison sentences, you find the people who might wind up in prison hospitals."

His experience, Hill said, is that despite hearings such as this one, no one is listening. "There's a kind of paralysis caused, I think, by fear," Hill said, "a fear of nuclear war. We do not want to see something that, if we were to speak out against (it), might increase the prospects of nuclear war."

He leveled criticism at Protestants who, upon hearing of a Christian in trouble behind the Iron Curtain, ask, "Is it a Pentecostal? A Baptist? A Russian Orthodox?" When, he asked, "did you hear a Jew here ask if a victim was Orthodox or Conservative?"

The last five years have seen stepped-up persecution of Christians, Hill said, and today there are 400 known Christian prisoners in the Soviet Union. Some, he said, face "perpetual imprisonment" in labor camps because of laws that have been changed to allow re-



Los Angeles Times

Ginte Damusis told of the plight of Catholics in Lithuania.

sentencing; now, an offense such as "praying at an improper time" may bring an additional three years in prison.

'A Fine Cup of Tea'

Hill, a student of modern Russian history, said Gorbachev "will pour a very fine cup of tea" when he visits the United States but because of his urbanity and sophistication is, in his opinion, "the most dangerous leader we have had to deal with in the West in perhaps 20 years." He spoke of "an almost sinister connection" between Soviet grandstand plays abroad and internal actions, suggesting, "when you think things are getting better . . . take another look."

"Catholicism has been afforded one of the least favored positions on the sliding scale" of religious discrimination in the Soviet Union, said Ginte Damusis. She attributed it to Catholics' "continuing resistance" in the matter of religious instruction to children and "above all, ties to the Vatican."

Lithuanian Catholics constitute the huge majority of Roman Catholics in the Soviet Union and, Damusis estimated, 75% of the 3.5 million people of Lithuania are "practicing Catholics" 45 years after Lithuania's annexation by the U.S.S.R.

Information on persecution of these faithful filters into the United States through copies of the Chronicle, a contraband publication of which 65 copies reached this country this month. Its pages tell of persecution and defiance, of acts of valor and acts of brutality.

There are the cases of the prisoner-priests, Father Sigitas Tamkevicius and Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, each sentenced to a total of 10 years in labor camp and in exile for their "crimes." Damusis noted that, in Father Tamkevicius' case, these included "organizing a Christmas party for parish youth."

It was "hardly accidental," she added, that both priests had been Helsinki monitors. The Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights was forced underground after their arrests in 1983, the first arrests in 12 years.

Another priest, Father Jonas-Kastytis Matulionis, was imprisoned for three years for organizing a procession to a parish cemetery to honor the dead. And, in 1981, "in full view of eyewitnesses," Damusis said, Father Bronius Laurinavicius, also a member of the Helsinki group and a vocal critic of the regime, was pushed to his death under an oncoming truck.

Persecution of religious dissidents may take less violent forms, Damusis said, such as forcible conscription into the military for "re-education" or disqualification from college entrance exams.

At the seminaries, she said, "Annual admissions are deliberately kept below the number of those who die and retire each year."

The election of a Polish Pope, John Paul II, cannot be discounted, said Damusis, in assessing the growth of the Catholic dissent

movement in Lithuania. There was outrage when the Pope was denied permission to travel to Lithuania for the jubilee of the nation's patron, St. Casimir.

Damusis quoted Father Svarinskas: "We don't have a few dissidents. We have a few collaborators."

Sister Ann Gillen, executive director of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, asked the status of nuns in Lithuania. "All religious orders were banned," Damusis said, when Lithuania was annexed, but "there are close to 2,500 underground nuns today . . . they apparently work at secular jobs during the day" and, in their free time, evangelize, conduct catechism classes and work for the underground press.

One, Sister Nijole Sadunaite, served six years in labor camp after being caught typing an issue of the Chronicle. For two years she has been in hiding in the Soviet Union, writing her memoirs, soon to be published here in English.

With it all, Damusis said, faith survives—"We've actually received letters from people who've traveled 40 miles on foot to go to Mass on Sunday."

Can't Buy a Bible

"Faith is still very strong in Russia," agreed Olga Stacevich who since 1973 has been collecting, translating and distributing, without compensation, extracts from the Free Press in the U.S.S.R. for publication as the Samizdat (Russian for "self-publishing") Bulletin. The underground Free Press, with material ranging from poetry to trial proceedings, is smuggled out of the Soviet Union by dissidents, at great risk. Stacevich, a naturalized citizen, was born in Vladivostok, four months before her parents fled the Bolshevik regime.

In her native Russia, she said, "Most of the finest and oldest (Russian Orthodox) churches have

been converted into museums or warehouses," even though existing churches cannot accommodate worshippers. It is "impossible," she said, to purchase a Bible and "hostility toward religion" is taught in schools.

In what she termed "a final onslaught on monasticism as a spiritual force," she spoke of arrests and searches of pilgrims visiting the monasteries, of conscription of younger monks and of older monks being "forcibly removed" to mental hospitals. "There are less than 1,500 religious left in the monasteries," she said, "and most of them are aging."

She told of one nun committed to a hospital for the criminally insane indefinitely for the crime of embroidering the 91st Psalm on belts.

Those hearing the testimony included City Council members Marvin Braude and Joy Picus, Rabbi Paul Dubin, executive director, Board of Rabbis of Southern California; Supervisor Ed Edelman, the Rev. Harold G. Hultgren of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, Father James N. Loughran, president of Loyola Marymount University, and the Rev. Truman Northrup, retired executive director of Pacific Southwest Conference, Church of the Brethren.

Commending the presenters for their "expert and un hysterical" testimony, moderator Mittleman, executive director of the Interreligious Task Force, said the next step would be to see that the transcript of the event, the task force's first formal hearing since 1977, finds its way "into the hands of human rights experts" throughout the world.

THE SOVIET UNION: NEW CAPABILITIES, OLD CONSTRAINTS

BACKGROUND

During the 68 years of Communist rule in the Soviet Union, the USSR has risen to become one of only two global superpowers. With the second largest economy, third largest population, and one of the two most capable military forces in the world, the USSR in many measures is a powerful and progressive state. Yet in other respects, the Soviet Union is beset by problems. Its economic growth rate has declined precipitously, labor productivity has slipped, infant mortality is rising, and many Soviet citizens view Marxism-Leninism with a jaundiced eye. In some areas, even the Soviet military has serious problems.

PURPOSE

This program will come to grips with one of the most critical issues of the late twentieth century: is the Soviet Union the expanding and aggressive "evil empire" it is sometimes depicted as being, is it the decaying "sick man of Europe" that others see it as, or is the truth of the matter — if there is a single truth — somewhere in between? Presentations and discussions will emphasize Russian and Soviet history, Marxist-Leninist ideology, Russian and Soviet cultural heritages, and the domestic and international social, economic, political, and military issues that the USSR faces today and will face tomorrow.

PROJECT DIRECTOR

DR. DANIEL S. PAPP
Professor of International Affairs and
Director, School of Social Sciences
Georgia Institute of Technology
Southern Center Fellow

STUDY GROUP

SCIS SEMINAR ROOM, 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

- May 1 "The Domestic Side of the USSR: Soviet Cultural, Economic, and Social Issues"
DR. THOMAS REMINGTON
Department of Political Science
Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia
- May 8 "A Profile of the Soviet Union: Past and Present Political, Military, and Foreign Policy Issues"
DR. DANIEL S. PAPP
- May 15 "A Soviet Perspective on the USSR"
DR. SERGEI ROGOV
Soviet Institute of the USA and Canada
Attached to the Soviet Embassy
Washington, D.C.
- May 22 "The USSR in the Third World: Opportunities and Constraints"
DR. DAVID ALBRIGHT
Professor of International Security Affairs
Air War College
- May 29 "The USSR and the East: Soviet Relations with the Communist World"
AMBASSADOR JACK PERRY
Professor of Political Science
The Citadel
South Carolina
Former U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria
- June 5 "The USSR and the West: Soviet Relations with the United States, Western Europe, and Japan"
AMBASSADOR MARTIN HILLENBRAND
Professor of Political Science
University of Georgia
Former U.S. Ambassador to West Germany and Hungary
Former Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs



Six Sessions
 Beginning Wednesday, May 1, 1985
 The Southern Center Seminar Room
 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

THE SOUTHERN CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
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 on
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STUDY GROUP LEADER

DANIEL S. PAPP is Professor of International Relations and Director of the School of Social Sciences at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He has also been a Senior Research Professor of the Army War College and Senior Research Associate at the U.S. Air University. Dr. Papp is the author of 5 books and over 30 articles on issues in Soviet and U.S. foreign and defense policies. He has traveled extensively in the Soviet Union, East and West Europe, China and Africa. Dr. Papp is a Southern Center Fellow for Military and Security Affairs.

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East-West human rights session opens in Ottawa

THE TORONTO STAR
Sunday, May 5, 1985

By Olivia Ward Toronto Star

Human rights watchers around the world should be excused for swallowing anti-depressants. For every missing person found alive, a dozen more disappear. For every released political prisoner, there are hundreds living like cockroaches in the world's most brutal jails.

But rights advocates are a hardy breed. They see signs for optimism in small things: Governments merely agreeing to discuss human rights are at the top of the list.

For the next six weeks, starting Tuesday, hopes will focus on Ottawa, where the first Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe devoted exclusively to human rights is taking place. During six weeks of meetings, 35 countries from East and West will face each other and try to talk politely about what each side considers none of the other's business.

The series of conferences were initiated by the Soviet Union in the 1950s, as a way of gaining recognition for post-war boundaries. But they became a vehicle for talks to promote progress on humanitarian issues and peaceful change in Europe. The first meeting was held at Helsinki, Finland, in 1972, ending with a "final act" in 1975, known as the Helsinki accords, a framework for international co-operation and respect for human rights.

Since Helsinki there have been meetings at Belgrade and Madrid. But the Ottawa conference of experts on human rights will be the first to set aside defence matters and focus purely on rights issues.

For the next six weeks, 35 nations will focus on concerns including the treatment of dissidents, restrictions on religious freedoms and covert support for government overthrows



A family of Soviet Pentacostalists, left, waged a 23-year battle to emigrate. Contributing to international tensions since the Helsinki accords were signed was the occupation of Afghanistan.



UPI PHOTO

ed are binding, they do show a political accord between leaders of nations. Most international affairs specialists believe that their real importance is to recognize basic human issues as a major factor in relations between states.

That isn't to say great progress has been made in adhering to the humanitarian principles. Shortly after the Soviet Union signed the Helsinki accords, it imprisoned several members of the Soviet committee formed to monitor human rights. Anatoly Shcharansky, one of the original monitors, is still a prisoner (see page F4).

Little improvement

Little has improved since. The last conference ended in Madrid in September, 1983, with a string of important principles, all of them contentious. Since 1983, a dozen of the 35 countries present have broken one or more of them, including:

□ **Ban on countries using their territories as training grounds for violent activities aimed at overthrow of other regimes:** Through the KGB and the CIA, as well as other covert organizations, both the Soviet Union and the United States train guerrillas and subversives to overthrow other countries. The Soviet Union has also been linked to funding of terrorist groups, while the U.S. has trained contras to overthrow the Nicaraguan government by force.

□ **Promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms:** In the Eastern bloc countries, except Yugoslavia, citizens cannot even leave the country when they wish, and other fundamental freedoms are severely curtailed.

□ **Affirmation of the right to practise religion or hold a belief according to the dictates of one's own conscience:** The persecution of Jews and Jewish religious teachers in the Soviet Union has worsened in the 1980s. The rights group Helsinki Watch says that religious and political persecution is now as severe as it was under Stalin, including reprisals against Pentacostalists and Seventh Day Adventists.

□ **Respect for rights of national minorities and protection of their legitimate**

interests: There have been constant reports of ill-treatment of minorities in the Soviet Union, while Yugoslavia persecutes ethnic Albanians who live in the country. Amnesty International has also called for investigations of Turkey's executions of Kurdish nationalists condemned in summary trials.

□ **Agreement that workers have the right to establish and join trade unions, and union to freely exercise activities:** Independent unions are not tolerated in Eastern bloc countries — the most spectacular example, Poland and the Solidarity union.

□ **Promotion of equal rights for men and women including action to ensure effective participation of both sexes in all endeavors:** The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has just rejected the doctrine that men and women should be paid the same for jobs of comparable worth. The Vatican, a party to the conference, has consistently refused to admit women for the Catholic priesthood.

A decade has passed since the Helsinki accords set down principles of human rights. In the interval, international relations have become what foreign affairs specialist William Bundy calls "extremely glacial."

The Soviets have invaded Afghanistan and shot down a Korean passenger plane. The Americans have taken an aggressive line in Central America and boycotted the Olympic Games. The Geneva arms talks have scarcely advanced. There's little sign that greater progress will be made in Ottawa.

"There has been a great deal of tension at past conferences," says Aurel Braun, associate professor of international relations at the University of Toronto.

"But the delegates came from higher levels of government than the ones who will be in Ottawa. This is purely a human rights meeting, without the defence and security agenda. It may make for a bet-

ter atmosphere."

And, says Braun, the prospect of a summit meeting between Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President Ronald Reagan has also brightened prospects. "We can expect less 'megaphone diplomacy' in Ottawa," he says.

But it would be a mistake to expect a softening of the Soviet attitude to human rights under Gorbachev, Braun warns.

"He's certainly younger, and very adept at dealing with the media. He has sent out signals he's willing to talk about arms control, but it is very unlikely he'll be flexible about the policies carried out within the U.S.S.R."

"When you look at the three new people Gorbachev has brought into the Politburo, all of them are associates of (former leader Yuri) Andropov, one is head of the KGB. Not people likely to be enthusiastic about human right concessions."

Persecution worse

Geneva Intrator, head of the Inter-Religious Task Force for human rights and religious freedom in the Soviet Union, agrees.

"In the past five years oppression has certainly become worse in the Soviet Union," she says. "Emigration has practically stopped. Religious persecution exists on a very large scale. People who have served sentences as dissidents go on being punished. There's suppression of national and cultural rights throughout the country. Realistically, we don't expect that to stop soon."

The U.S. standing committee on Helsinki, a group that monitors human rights in the Soviet Union, accuses the Soviets of "a Kremlin anti-dissent campaign" including broadening of laws defining dissidence, and stricter control over citizens' contacts with Westerners.

According to the committee, there has also been a renewed attempt to wipe out unofficially published literature, along with "greater violence and more brutal

treatment of political prisoners, as seen in the death of seven prisoners of conscience in 1984."

Much of the heat at the Ottawa conference will be turned on the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc. But, says Brian Cameron of Amnesty International, Ottawa, it would be a mistake to ignore rights violations of other countries.

"There are systematic and appalling violations in Turkey, for instance," he says. "We want to see the entire spectrum covered."

Amnesty's concerns include imprisonment of people in Bulgaria on political and religious grounds, as well as detention in psychiatric hospitals, poor prison conditions, ill-treatment and execution of prisoners.

In Czechoslovakia, says an Amnesty report, "the pattern of repression has changed from long-term imprisonment to intimidation, short-term detention, suspended sentences and various kinds of harassment."

In Italy, political prisoners are subjected to excessively long pre-trial imprisonment, and there are allegations of torture of people suspected of political crimes.

In Poland, authorities continue to arrest people for "non-violent exercise of fundamental human rights," including participation in peaceful demonstrations. Supporters of Solidarity report beatings and police violence in prison. Eleven people have died during or immediately after imprisonment.

In Northern Ireland, special courts condemn people on the basis of confessions that may have been made under duress. Normal English rules of evidence have also been set aside.

In the U.S., there have been persistent reports of ill-treatment of prisoners by police and jail guards.

In Yugoslavia, Amnesty is concerned about imprisonment of people on political grounds, lack of fair trials, confine-

ment in psychiatric hospitals, ill-treatment of prisoners and imposition of death sentences.

During the six weeks of meetings in Ottawa, "experts" chosen to represent each country will present reports on human rights.

"Canadians must not remain neutral or silent," says a statement of the Canadian Bar Association. The association wants Canada and other countries to discuss their own shortcomings at the conference, which has never been a forum for self-criticism.

(Earlier this year Canadian native Indian delegations took their grievances to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, and Amnesty International had expressed concern about the treatment of inmates at Archambault prison.)

Extremely valuable

The bar association also calls for a permanent Helsinki Commission in Canada, to report on the compliance of Canada and other countries with the accords. And it urges that the Ottawa meetings be open to non-governmental organizations, citizens' groups that monitor human rights.

"Usually, those groups are the first to observe and report violations of human rights," says John Foster of the United Church of Canada. "Their contribution is extremely valuable."

Foster says he is not optimistic about the results of the conference, which is in danger of becoming "a political carnival."

"The foreign affairs departments that do the organizing aren't necessarily dedicated to human rights," he says. "In many cases they're more interested in political grandstanding."

Whatever the level of rhetoric, and however few the gains, most rights advocates believe that the next six weeks in Ottawa can only be a positive step.

06.01.85.

Tatiana Zushine

St. Kahovka 4 apt. 131, Riga, USSR

Dear friend!

Sorry for I couldn't reply to you earlier. Thank you very much for your help. It is very good for us now to know we are not alone.

We are going through the very hard time. My husband Zachar has begun serving his 3 year sentence in the labour camp near Irkutsk. At the very beginning he was beaten severely by the "activists" - the criminals, who collaborate with the administration of the camp because of his rejection to be an 'activist'. In the middle of November Zachar was compelled to declare a hunger-strike. No details about the period of hunger-strike as well as the later containing in the punishment cell are available.

As you see, the treatment of my husband is very bad and the sufferings, he has currently experienced, continue. The sufferings, which had broken the heart of Zachar's mother and she died.

But what they couldn't break is Zachar's will. He remains as strong as always in spite of all he undergoes. He does not lose spirit.

Please send letters to Zachar to let him know he is not forgotten.

His address is: Zachar Zushine

Institution UK-272/40, Bosoï

Ehirit-Bulagatski district, Irkutsk region, USSR

Please send letters to the administration of the camp: Colonel Stepanko, and major Kofel if the situation in the camp will not improve.

Zachar's and my very best regards to you. I would be happy to see you or any of your friends in my home and to have letters from you.

Sincerely, Tanya Zushine.

COALITION TO FREE SOVIET JEWS

Representing concerned organizations in New York City, Long Island, Westchester, Rockland and Bergen Counties.
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 11, 1985

KHARKOV HEBREW TEACHER SENTENCED TO TWO AND A HALF YEARS

Kharkov Jewish activist Evgeny Aisenberg was convicted of "defaming the Soviet State" and sentenced to two and a half years in a labor camp, the Coalition to Free Soviet Jews reported today. Aisenberg, age 33, had been intensively involved in studying and teaching Hebrew and Jewish culture since 1978, when his pro-emigration activities led him to lose his job as a mechanical engineer.

The major evidence used against him was the text of three Purim skits which he participated in last year. Aisenberg will be forced to separate from his wife, Marina, who has breast cancer and requires surgery.

"Once again, the mere observance of Jewish holidays is interpreted by the Soviet government as 'circulating false fabrications against the State'", said Herbert Kronish, chairman of the Coalition to Free Soviet Jews. "The real fabrication, however, is this charge of slander. A Purim skit is simply not a defamation of the Soviet State."

Aisenberg is one of several Jewish culture activists to be incarcerated in the Soviet Union since last July. Yuli Edelshtein, a 26-year old Hebrew teacher who is serving a three-year term in a labor camp, is suffering daily beatings by fellow inmates. There is concern that this brutal treatment will continue as with Iosif Berenshtein, another Prisoner of Conscience, who recently had his eyes gouged by fellow inmates.

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The Coalition to Free Soviet Jews is the central coordinating agency for a coalition of 85 organizations and community groups in New York City, Long Island, Westchester, Rockland, and Bergen Counties, working for the freedom of Soviet Jews.

M.T.

A week of political reconciliation and racial confrontation

C.S.A.

By Joseph C. Harsch 7.26.85

Highlights in world news this past week were the official strengthening of the great reconciliation between Americans and Chinese and the disclosure that the Israelis and the Russians are exploring the possibility of renewed relations.

Also came word from London that an even more ancient hostility, that between the English and the Irish, is being subjected to a serious effort at liquidation which just might produce early and peaceful results.

But in South Africa the struggle between whites and blacks took a new turn. Eleven blacks have died since the white government gave emergency powers to the police to seize and hold without trial, to muzzle the press, and to impose curfews.

In Washington a White House reception with all courtesies to Li Xiannian, President of the People's Republic of China, ceremonialized the remarkable distance toward reconciliation that the Chinese and Americans have traveled since Ronald Reagan took office proposing to turn in the opposite direction.

It was a first visit to Washington by a president of a Chinese government which

is still listed as "communist China" in the vernacular of Washington. It included the signing of an agreement to permit US firms to provide China with the technology and materials for developing nuclear energy on a large scale. It showed that the Reagan administration desires to continue a broadening and deepening of the United States association with China even though the Chinese have been negotiating with the Soviets toward a restoration of

PATTERN OF DIPLOMACY

formal diplomatic relations.

Americans and Chinese were in a state of hostility with each other from the Korean war in 1950 to the Nixon trip to China in 1972. Americans and Chinese now have a relationship which comes close to being an alliance against the Soviet Union. Their mutual interest in checking the spread of Soviet influence in Asia has overcome their ideological differences.

Can a similar reconciliation take place between the Soviet Union and the world Jewish community?

Until this week many a diplomat has

dreamed of such an event but hardly considered it to be a serious possibility. Soviet treatment of Jews inside the Soviet Union and Soviet hostility toward Israel in Soviet foreign policy have been fixed features in world affairs since 1967.

The lack of relations between the Soviet Union and Israel has been a major stumbling block to any attempt to build a peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. It has been a major feature in US-Soviet relations. Any new version of a détente in US-Soviet relations is probably impossible unless or until there is first a reconciliation between the Russians and the world Jewish community.

Thus many a diplomatic eyebrow lifted in startled surprise when the news was "leaked" that the Soviet and Israeli ambassadors to France had met in Paris and sketched out the possible terms of a détente in their relations.

Can it go anywhere? All we have so far are Moscow's conditions for such a reconciliation. It requires that US Jews cease from what Moscow regards as a consistent anti-Soviet campaign in the US. It requires a resolution of the problem of the Golan Heights between Israel and Syria.

Please see PATTERN next page

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And it calls for some means whereby Soviet Jews emigrating from the Soviet Union will actually go to Israel, not to the US.

The disclosure of the meeting in Paris and of the tentative terms for, in effect, a peace treaty between Moscow and the world Jewish community precipitated a debate throughout that community.

The debate is going on now. To accept Moscow's terms would be to readmit Moscow to a direct role in the affairs of the Middle East. It would mean going back in Middle East affairs not just to the Camp David context but even further to the earlier days when the subject was to be handled in an international committee under the joint chairmanship of the US and the Soviet Union.

Are Israel and Israel's coreligionists in the outside world ready for such a deal with Moscow? The answer is being beaten out now in thousands of meetings and debates. At this stage one can only know that if the terms should happen to prove acceptable, a comprehensive peace in the Middle East would be easier to find than it is now. Also, the chances for anything substantial to come of the prospective summit in Geneva between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in September would be improved.

Perhaps just as difficult to visualize would be a reconciliation between the English and the Irish. Yet the

fact is that a joint British-Irish committee of experts has been hard at work on a formula that would give the Irish government a voice in the affairs of Northern Ireland. The committee, which reports to the cabinet secretaries of the two countries, is reported to be nearly ready for a formal report.

An English army invaded Ireland in 1169 under Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke, known as "Strongbow." There has been friction and trouble between English and Irish ever since.

It became particularly acute over northern Ireland when the English, in the early 1600s, took most of the land away from Irish owners and resettled the north with Protestants from across the Irish Channel.

Hostilities between Americans and Chinese have turned into an almost alliance. Peace between Russians and Jews is being explored. Peace between English and Irish is under most serious consideration. But between blacks and whites in South Africa there is a condition verging on open civil war.

That situation is a long way from being ripe for peace negotiations.

11/19/85



National Conference on Soviet Jewry

DATE: October 11, 1985

TO: Board of Governors
Member Agencies/Interested Parties

FROM: Jerry Goodman, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Approaching the Summit - National Activity for November 19th

With only weeks remaining before the summit meeting between President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev gets underway, a campaign to attract maximum attention and support for the Soviet Jewry issue is already in motion. Many communities have responded positively, and are focusing significant activity toward the summit.

To organize events in this country, NCSJ Chairman Morris B. Abram named Gerald Kraft, NCSJ Vice Chairman and President of B'nai B'rith International, to chair a special committee to stimulate Jewish community efforts in coordination with the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC) and local chapters of B'nai B'rith International.

From all indications, the response by synagogues during the high holidays was a strong one. Rabbis and educators focused on the religious and cultural deprivation of Soviet Jews, and took the opportunity to help mobilize for the future.

We assume you have already begun to galvanize local, state and federal officials, academicians and leaders from legal, scientific and business arenas. An ad campaign, sponsored by community leaders, should already be underway, with space reserved in the Jewish and general press. Again, the theme should stress the compatibility of peace, human rights and progress for Soviet Jews.

Nationally, activity during September focused on the presence of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in New York for the U.N. General Assembly and, later, in Washington, D.C. to meet with President Reagan. To that end, community leadership met with Foreign Ministers from West Germany, France, Italy and Switzerland, urging them to raise the question of Jewish emigration in meetings with Shevardnadze and other Soviet officials. Rallies were held in both cities, involving interreligious and political support, and were successful in attracting the media. In Washington, a letter -- suggested by the NCSJ and signed by every member of the U.S. Senate -- was initiated by Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-KN) and Minority Leader Robert Byrd (D-WV). The letter was presented to President Reagan, and urged him to raise the Soviet Jewry issue in Geneva.

The approach we continue to take is that the Soviet Union will gain greater credibility in other bilateral and regional issues if the issue of Soviet Jewish emigration sees progress. Meanwhile, Gorbachev is pushing a propaganda line suggesting that there is no religious persecution in the Soviet Union, and that many Jews hold positions of great stature within Soviet society. Gorbachev stressed this approach before French journalists prior to his meeting with French President Francois Mitterand. It was rebroadcast on ABC Nightline on October 1st (see William Safire's response, attached).

A coalition of over forty major national organizations and over two hundred local community councils and federations



Furthermore, the Soviet Embassy in Washington has recently distributed a three-page report to the Western media on Birobidzhan, the so-called Jewish autonomous region, focusing on the 50th anniversary of the region's Yiddish newspaper, Birobidzhaner Stern, and the alleged "high quality of cultural life" enjoyed by Birobidzhan's Jewish population.

To counter these fabrications, the NCSJ is preparing a revised fact book giving the real story behind the fiction. The book, which will be widely distributed in December, will contain updated statistical data on education, religion, culture, employment and emigration.

In recent testimony before two congressional subcommittees, NCSJ Chairman Morris B. Abram expressed "some hope" based upon the upcoming summit, but also noted that, since Gorbachev's coming to power, the situation for Soviet Jews has continued to deteriorate. Speaking before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Relations and the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, Abram addressed the role of the U.S. government in support of Soviet Jewry, and termed the Geneva meeting as a "window of opportunity." While he continued to reject the concept of linking Soviet Jewish emigration to arms negotiations, Abram stressed "it is an uneradicable fact that Americans will more readily trust the Soviet word affecting our security when Moscow gives credible evidence that they will comply with previous human rights undertakings which do not affect their security interests." The complete text of the testimony is available from the NCSJ.

To sustain the level of consciousness aroused by the summit, the NCSJ will make available new POC and Refusenik Identification Bracelets. We urge organizations and individuals to show their solidarity with Soviet Jews through this personal demonstration of concern. Ten different names are available, including POC's Iosif Begun and Anatoly Shcharansky, and activists Ida Nudel, Aleksandr Lerner and Lev and Leah Shapiro. At a cost of \$8 each, the bracelets will be available in November. CRC's, federations and synagogues should place orders now, and promote locally. They make excellent gifts for B'nai Mitzvot, community leaders and Soviet Jewry activists.

To provide greater assistance in efforts to communicate through the mails with "adopted" Soviet Jews, the U.S. Postal Service has prepared, with the assistance of the NCSJ, a pamphlet entitled "Mailing to the Soviet Union." The text will provide up-to-date instructions on sending letters, postcards and telegrams to the USSR, and will be available through the NCSJ starting November.

Yes, we've been busy! Now, with less than six weeks remaining before the Geneva talks begin, the following should be underway to maximize our impact:

MID-OCTOBER

- Thank Senators for their support, demonstrated by their participation in the September 26th letter to President Reagan.
- Continue writing to President Reagan, supporting the U.S. commitment to raise the issue (which he has pledged to do), but, more importantly, to work out a mutually effective solution.
- Make final programming plans for public events to be held on November 19th. Be sure to publicize the event before and after the date!

- Arrange to send airmail letters or aerograms directly to Geneva, to arrive before November 18th.

SUGGESTED TEXTS FOR COMMUNIQUES TO GENEVA

To Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev:

- Peace can only be achieved if individual human rights are respected. Allow Soviet Jews to be repatriated to Israel.
- The road to peace among nations starts with mutual trust among peoples. Allow Soviet Jews to be reunited with family in Israel.

To President Ronald Reagan:

- Peace can be achieved when individual human rights are respected. Keep the issue of Soviet Jewry on the agenda of your talks with Mr. Gorbachev and work toward a mutually effective solution.

ADDRESSES

President Ronald Reagan
U.S. Mission to the U.N.
11, rte. Pregny
Case Postale
1292 Chambesy/GE

General Secretary
Mikhail Gorbachev
USSR Mission to the U.N.
15, av. Paix
1202 Geneva

NOVEMBER

- Submit op-ed pieces and letters to editors.
- Order POC and Refusenik Identification Bracelets from the NCSJ.
- Alert media to planned events for November, and encourage their coverage.
- Have advertising schedule locked in place.
- Make plans to attend the NCSJ Annual Leadership Conference, December 9 - 11. Enlist others!
- November 16- 17 - Synagogues and churches should be encouraged to feature appropriate sermons, appeals and prayers for peace, human rights and progress for Soviet Jews. Release statements of conscience by interreligious leaders to the media.
- November 19 - Public events to take place internationally, including:
 - Jewish prayer vigils
 - Demonstrations, focused on peace, human rights and Soviet Jews
 - "Moment of Silence," throughout the community
 - Public prayer vigils and fasts involving personalities, clergy, elected officials, lawyers and academicians

- Compile all clippings, correspondence, etc. and send to NCSJ office, in addition to any other national agencies.

DECEMBER

- December 8 - First Day of Hanukkah. Remember Soviet Jews in public and private candlelighting ceremonies.
- Women's Plea events will take place in most cities during this week, providing the opportunity to review the summit and strengthen support for the future.
- December 9 - 11 - Attend the NCSJ Annual Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. Central themes will include an assessment of the summit and of the Helsinki (CSCE) program vis-a-vis Soviet Jews.
- December 14 - Shabbat Hanukkah. Good day for synagogue sermons and discussions on the summit.



Publicity Boomerang

WASHINGTON
During the Andropov-Chernenko era, the central aim of Soviet policy was to get Western front groups to stop the deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe. That failed. The central aim of the Gorbachev Kremlin is to stop the American testing of space defense weapons, this time using the most modern communications techniques to appeal to "world opinion."

The Charm Offensive must have seemed like a great idea to the new Soviet leadership. Western media offer easy access for the Russian anti-space-defense message. But "Smilin' Mike" Gorbachev is beginning to discover that playing with public opinion is playing with fire.

1. *Credibility abroad.* Watching him answering questions on television, Western viewers no longer compare him with his dour predecessors. Instead, we now measure him against his buildup: the glowing reports we have been hearing about the articulate, self-assured, pragmatic man.

We now see he is not as smooth as cracked up to be. He takes long, dramatic pauses before saying ominously — never in pessimism, mind you — that "we have reached a point beyond which events may get out of hand." This is intended to strike fear in the hearts of his listeners. He is not such a hot actor, however. His dramatic pauses are melodramatic; television's eye resists such attempts at manipulation. His threat loses potency with each repetition.

2. *Credibility at home.* The Kremlin decision to go public with its appeal for a defense freeze exposes the Soviet people (no longer "peoples") to the sight of their leader saying what the average person knows from personal experience to be untrue.

In an interview telecast in the Soviet Union as well as France, a French interviewer, Yves Mourousi, dared to ask about human rights.

Mr. Gorbachev said there were "exceptions" to Soviet policy in reunifying families "when individuals in point know state secrets" — meaning Andrei Sakharov, the dissident scientist kept out of touch for decades — but claimed "we will continue to resolve these questions without fuss, on the basis of a humanitarian approach." Sure.

He further stretched the credulity of his audience both at home and abroad by admitting he had some people who "profess some different ideology. Problems in such cases arise when one individual or other comes into conflict with law. That is what happened to Shcharansky mentioned by you." The "crime" of Anatoly Shchara was to apply for

Gorbachev is playing with fire

emigration, which made him a spy.

He then warmed to his topic. "You mentioned the 'Jewish question.' I would be glad to hear of Jews enjoying anywhere such political and other rights as they have in our country. The Jewish population, who account for 0.69 percent of the entire population of our country, are represented in its political and cultural life on a scale of at least 10 to 20 percent. Most of them are people well known in the country."

That's the old Hitler technique: if you tell a lie big enough, some people will believe it. Most Russians are well aware that there are no Jews at the top of the party, the military, the K.G.B. or the Foreign Service (except Georgi Arbatov, who doesn't admit it). The number of Jews permitted higher education has been cut in half in the last 15 years. Why do at least 350,000 Jews ache to leave the Soviet Union, and why were those who dared to apply to leave turned into *refuseniks*, hounded out of Soviet society?

Many viewers, not just Jews, who watch Mr. Gorbachev proclaim the U.S.S.R. a Jewish paradise on Soviet television are going to realize that their leader is a liar. And a man who can keep a straight face lying about Jews might be less than trustworthy about "Star Wars."

3. *Credibility with kidnappers.* An unexpected downside to Mr. Gorbachev's courting of world opinion is the new vulnerability of Soviet diplomats to terrorism. The only governments that terrorists try to intimidate are those that are concerned with public opinion. Up to now, the Kremlin has subsidized terrorism and been relatively untouched; but with the hand-pumping, crowd-pleasing Mr. Gorbachev in power, some murderous zealots evidently feel the Russians are no longer above blackmail.

Moscow cannot be forced by kidnappers to tell its Syrian client to ease up on the terrorists' friends, but neither can Mr. Gorbachev fail to react. If he does nothing about protecting his nationals, he will be seen in world opinion as being as weak as Mr. Reagan has been, but if he slams the Sunni Moslems, there goes Iraq.

Thus does "Smilin' Mike" discover that publicity, so good for a world leader to get, can turn pitiless. □

THE JERUSALEM POST

Thursday, October 3, 1985

Gorbachev hopes Paris visit will spark return to detente

PARIS (Reuter). — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev yesterday arrived in France on his first trip to the West since he took office in March and said he hoped the visit would help lead to a return to detente.

Gorbachev was greeted by President Francois Mitterrand when he arrived to a state welcome at Orly Airport.

In an exchange of addresses after the inspection of an honour guard, Mitterrand said France recognized the Soviet Union as a fundamental element in the balance of the world and had always sought dialogue with Moscow "provided the conditions allowed it."

Gorbachev said he hoped his visit would give impetus to further fruitful relations and reinforce "mutual understanding between East and West."

The Soviet Union was ready for constructive dialogue, he said, "in the search for a return to detente, preventing an arms race in space and ceasing it on earth."

"We want to oppose the logic of understanding to the antilogic of confrontation," Gorbachev said.

The Soviet leader's wife, Raisa, was also welcomed by Mitterrand and his wife, Danielle.



Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, left, and French President Francois Mitterrand stand to attention during arrival ceremonies at Orly airport in Paris yesterday. (Reuter telephoto)

In his welcoming words Mitterrand made an oblique allusion to the killings of Soviet diplomats in Lebanon, saying the world was balanced between hope and uncertainty and was too often prey to conflicts which "strike at human dignities and which today struck at men."

Gorbachev: We have no Jewish problem

PARIS (JTA). — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev believes that there is no Jewish problem in the Soviet Union and that "nowhere else in the entire world do Jews enjoy such extensive political and other rights as they do in the USSR."

Gorbachev arrived in Paris yesterday afternoon for a four-day visit.

Gorbachev said on French television: "The Jewish population represents 0.69 per cent of our total population but they represent 10 to 20 per cent of those (playing an active role) in the political and cultural process."

The Soviet leader, who devoted some 10 minutes of his time on the air to this issue, added: "If there is a problem of (family) reunions, we accept this (problem) and we solve these problems (by granting permission for such reunions)."

Gorbachev added: "We prevent such a solution only if state secrets are involved. Even to these people (who know state secrets) we give the possibility to wait five or 10 years. If then, they have to leave to rejoin their families (abroad) we grant them the necessary authorizations and the people leave."



SOVIET JEWRY RALLY STRESSES NEED TO KEEP THIS ISSUE ON AGENDA OF TALKS BETWEEN REAGAN AND GORBACHEV

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Sept. 29 (JTA) -- While President Reagan and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze met for four hours in the White House Friday, some 100 persons gathered across the street in Lafayette Park to stress the need to keep the cause of Soviet Jewry on the agenda of the talks between the United States and the Soviet Union.

"The Soviet government is aware what we do here today, perhaps in a sense, more aware than our own government," Rep. Michael Barnes (D. Md.), a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, told the rally sponsored by the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington.

Barnes stressed that demonstrations, letters and other signs of support "makes a difference" and said he and others have been told this "by the people whose freedom we seek," Jews in the USSR.

Sen. Paul Trible (R. Va.), member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called the "continuing persecution" of Soviet Jewry "one of the most sustained, systematic and severe acts of repression in history." He said he has been assured that President Reagan will bring up the issue during his summit conference in Geneva with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

100 Senators Send Letter To Reagan

Only a day earlier a letter was hand delivered to the White House signed by all 100 Senators urging the President to raise the human rights issue with Gorbachev.

The letter was initiated by Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R. Kan.) and Minority Leader Robert Byrd (D. W. Va.) and suggested by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

At Friday's rally, Barnes' point that demonstrations make a difference was illustrated by Rabbi Leonard Cahan of Congregation Har Shalom, who is president of the Washington Board of Rabbis which held a daily freedom fast for Soviet Jewish Prisoners of Conscience across from the Soviet Embassy from the day after Rosh Hashanah through last Thursday.

The rabbis distributed literature and spoke about the situation to members of their congregations and to those participating in the noon vigil across from the Embassy sponsored by the Jewish Community Council for the last 15 years.

Cahan said they held up a small sign and were asked by a member of the Secret Service to put it away because the Soviets had complained. The rabbi said he was told that it was really irritating the Soviets.

Christian Clerics Participate In Fast

On Yom Kippur, Christian clergymen participated in the freedom fast and two of them were arrested. At the rally Friday, the Rev. Clark Lobenstine, executive director of the Interfaith of Metropolitan Washington, said Christians demonstrated as "people of faith to express solidarity with people of faith in the Soviet Union who are being persecuted."

He said Jews and others are not being allowed "to practice their faith freely in their country nor have they been free to leave to practice their faith elsewhere."

Ira Bartfield, chairman of the Jewish Community Council's Soviet Jewry Committee, stressed that peace was the most important issue to be discussed between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. But he noted that peace must include the human rights of Soviet Jews.

Another participant in the rally was Daniel Yelenik, 15, a sophomore at the Hebrew Academy of Greater Washington, who described his meetings with Soviet refuseniks two years ago and with their relatives in Israel. He noted that when Soviet Jews emigrate to Israel their suffering does not end because members of their families are not also allowed to leave the USSR. He declared that Soviet refuseniks "are not guilty of any crimes, they are not enemies of the USSR, they just want to go home."

• Fri., Sept. 20, 1985

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Americans Urged To Support Reagan Talks On Soviet Jews

An advocate for Soviet Jews is urging Americans to give vocal support to President Ronald Reagan's efforts to alleviate oppression for Soviet Jews.

Jerry Goodman, executive director of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, said here Thursday that Reagan had expressed sympathy for the cause and planned to make the plight of Soviet Jews the major human-rights issue in his talks with Mikhail S. Gorbachev in Geneva in November. The Reagan-Gorbachev summit convenes Nov. 19.

The agency is involved in worldwide advocacy for the right of oppressed Soviet Jews to leave Russia. Goodman was in St. Louis to speak Thursday at the Jewish Community Centers Association in west St. Louis County.

Goodman noted that emigration of Soviet Jews had slowed to a trickle — fewer than 100 a month in 1985, compared with more than 4,000 a month in 1979. He said, "I'm convinced the president would be in a better position to deal with Gorbachev if he knew there were people out there — Jews as well as non-Jews — who cared."

Goodman said his organization believed "it will be very difficult to pass an arms agreement in the Senate if the Soviet Union is not honoring other less critical agreements."

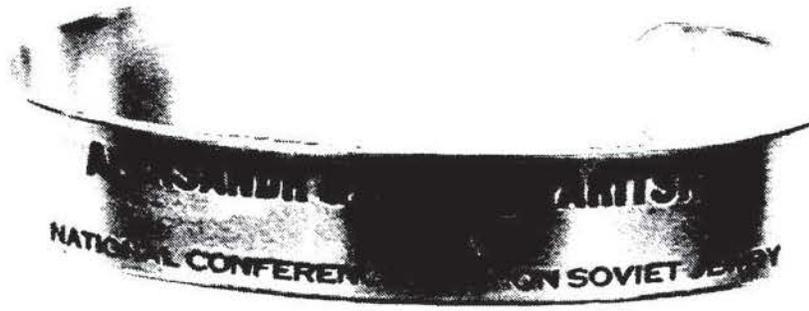
By refusing to allow Jews to emigrate, the Soviet Union had violated human-rights provisions of the Helsinki pact of 1975, Goodman said.

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National Conference on Soviet Jewry

10 East 40th Street • Suite 907 • New York, NY 10016

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY



STILL TRAPPED IN THE SOVIET UNION

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry invites you to join our adoption program in a very special way. You can show solidarity with Soviet Jews by wearing the *new* handsome, stainless steel Refusenik Identification Bracelet. This personal demonstration of caring is one way to keep alive the plight of those who are **STILL TRAPPED IN THE SOVIET UNION**.

Bracelets will be available through local Soviet Jewry Committees, CRCs, Federations, local organizations or synagogues, as well as from the National Conference on Soviet Jewry. They are appropriate gifts for B'nai Mitzvot or school awards, and as presentations to public officials, community leaders, or Soviet Jewry activists. The bracelets provide a personal link to a family in the USSR—often the impetus to further involvement.

Ten different bracelets are available, each engraved with the name of a Jewish Prisoner of Conscience or a long-term Refusenik, and packaged with a brief biography. The cost is \$8.00 each. \$7.00 for orders of 10 or more. Please indicate the quantity and make checks payable to the NCSJ. Payment in U.S. dollars must accompany all orders.

IF YOU FORGET THEM, THE WORLD WILL FORGET THEM!

Send to: National Conference on Soviet Jewry
10 East 40th Street, Suite 907
New York, New York 10016

I wish to order the following bracelets at \$8.00 each (\$7.00 for 10 or more).

<u>Name</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
Iosif Begun	_____	Aba & Ida Taratuta	_____
Yakov Levin	_____	Ilya & Anna Essas	_____
Anatoly Shcharansky	_____	Alexander Lerner	_____
Ida Nudel	_____	Sonia Melnikova	_____
Lev & Leah Shapiro	_____	Aleksandr & Polina Paritsky	_____
		TOTAL	_____

I have enclosed \$ _____ for _____ bracelets (Check or money order).

Name _____
(Please Print)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please allow 2 weeks for delivery.

Ron cutting deal for Jews

11. 1. 85

N.Y. News 4

If Sovs ease emigration, they get trade bonus

Washington: President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev are quietly moving toward a deal at their Geneva summit to open the gates for greatly increased emigration by Soviet Jews, the Daily News has learned.



Lars-Erik Nelson

In return for ending the six-year-old clampdown that has reduced Jewish emigration to a trickle, Gor-

bachev would be rewarded with a presidential waiver of the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment, which placed tariffs on Soviet goods as long as emigration was curtailed.

The prospective breakthrough would give Reagan a significant triumph at a summit that is not expected to produce much movement on its central issue, arms control. It would also further Gorbachev's goal of improving the Soviet image in the United States.

But the deal could be controversial, especially among American Jewish organizations skeptical of past Soviet behavior toward Jews. "Unless the assurances were very specific, we

would not find that kind of agreement acceptable," said Zeesy Schnor of the New York-based Coalition to Free Soviet Jewry.

But a leading congressional source said that a majority of Jewish organiza-

COMMENTARY

tions have agreed they would not protest a one-year waiver of the Jackson-Vanik amendment—on the understanding that Reagan would not grant the waiver without having received Soviet assurances.

Also involved in the prospective

deal is some form of normalization of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel.

Moscow broke off ties with Israel after the 1967 Middle East war, but in his speech to the United Nations last month, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres invited the Russians to resume relations and act as sponsors of renewed Middle East peace talks. Gorbachev, in turn, has seemed eager to get his country back into the middle of Mideast peace negotiations, from which it has been excluded for 18 years.

Another element in the agreement is

See NELSON Page 46

NELSON FROM PAGE FOUR

a French role in flying Soviet Jews to Israel. This has been reported in two ways: As an offer by French President Mitterrand to facilitate the flights, and as an offer by Gorbachev to allow Soviet Jews to leave, via France, in advance of the summit.

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry estimates that 350,000 to 400,000 would leave if they could.

"Until they get off an airplane, they're not out," said William Keyserling, of the National Conference's Washington office. "The most important thing is to establish a process for a regular flow of emigration."

Part of the groundwork for the prospective summit agreement was laid during a trip to Moscow in September by Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, one source said. Two Israeli diplomats recently visited Moscow on official business, Western diplomats there reported on Wednesday.

Bronfman also met Polish Premier Wojciech Jaruzelski last month, five days before Poland and Israel announced they would resume diplomatic relations—also broken in 1967—by exchanging "interest sections." The Israeli-Polish exchange, which would not have been permitted without Soviet approval, has been cited as a possible model for Moscow and Jerusalem.

The Soviet Union has reportedly suggested that it would allow more Jews to leave if the American Jewish community ceased what the Russians call "anti-Soviet propaganda." One aspect of the arrangement that is being worked out would also assure that Jewish-American organizations do not accuse Reagan of betraying Soviet Jews by lifting the tariffs in advance of visible signs of increased emigration.

The agreement to allow more Jews to emigrate will be quiet and informal, the sources said. In public, it may involve no more than Reagan returning from Geneva and announcing the waiver of the Jackson-Vanik amendment in accordance with its two provisions:

That a waiver will serve the objective of increased Jewish emigration and that he has received assurances that Soviet emigration practices will be relaxed.

Reagan can reimpose the tariffs any time he wants to, if the Russians don't live up to their end of the bargain.

On the Soviet side, the Russians would assure the U.S. that they will live up to existing Soviet laws on reunification of families and repatriation of nationalities—the law used before the establishment of Israel to allow Jews to leave for Palestine. In the past, the Russians have always insisted that their emigration rules are an internal matter, and have balked at agreeing to fixed numbers of exit visas.

Senate sources report there is a general recognition that the Jackson-Vanik amendment has not been effective in securing the emigration of large numbers of Jews. Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) suggested to a colleague on the Senate floor this week that Jackson-Vanik had "outlived its usefulness," one source reported.

"We politicians have been making beautiful anti-Communist speeches to the people who hold the keys to this jail, and it hasn't impressed them one bit," a Senate source said. "You don't really help Soviet Jewish emigration by continually calling the Russians Nazis."

One model for the new deal would be the "quiet diplomacy" used by Henry Kissinger in the early 1970s. During those years, Jewish emigration rose from 400 in 1968, to almost 35,000 in 1973. The peak year was 1979, with 51,000 exit visas granted, but since then the number has dropped to about 1,000 a year.

ITOLD (Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin if the Soviets heeded our humanitarian appeals, we would not as a government exploit the propaganda value of those released," Kissinger wrote in his memoirs.

"Excerpts of the Kissinger memoirs are being passed around on the Senate floor," a Capitol Hill source reported.

Interreligious Affairs Department
AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
165 East 56th Street
New York, New York 10022

Date: Nov. 10

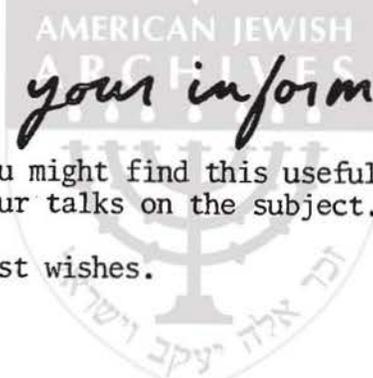
From: Rabbi Alan Mittleman

To: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum

For your information:

You might find this useful in
your talks on the subject.

Best wishes.



THE STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS SURVIVAL IN THE SOVIET UNION

Testimony Presented at Hearings of
The National Interreligious Task Force
on Soviet Jewry, 1985-86





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PREFACE

The powerful and moving testimonies elicited by the public hearings held by the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry in 1985-86 are a unique contribution to the cause of human rights and religious liberty. Cutting across religious and ethnic lines, they signify the commitment of the American people to the struggle to bring freedom to their brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union. We sincerely hope these testimonies will spur similar efforts in other communities throughout the United States.

The Task Force wishes to thank the many people who made possible the hearings at which these testimonies were presented. It was a difficult and complicated task, but we believe the results were well worth the effort. The professional staff of the American Jewish Committee in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Seattle, including Barbara Hurst, Minto Keaton, Zev Kessler, Jonathan Levine, Neil Sandberg, and Richard Zelin, involved themselves in every detail of the planning and execution of those programs. The hearings could not have occurred without them and the panels of distinguished local civil and religious leaders -- too many to mention here -- who received the testimony. The Task Force also acknowledges the support of Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, and DePaul University, Chicago, for making their facilities available. The Martin Tanenbaum Foundation has faithfully provided the grants which help the Task Force advance its work. We are in their debt.

We are especially grateful to Dr. Alan Mittleman of the American Jewish Committee, who edited this volume.

Rabbi A. James Rudin, Director
Interreligious Affairs Department
American Jewish Committee

Sr. Ann Gillen, Executive Director
National Interreligious Task Force
on Soviet Jewry

INTRODUCTION

Alan L. Mittleman
Executive Coordinator
National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry

During 1985-86, the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry held three public hearings in Los Angeles, Chicago and Seattle. At each hearing, expert witnesses testified on the treatment of their coreligionists in the USSR. The hearings were called "Culture and Community: The Struggle for Religious Liberty in the USSR." Although it might be objectionable, from an analytic point of view, to pair "culture" and "religion" in this fashion, the reader of this testimony will quickly discover that -- for the Soviet minorities involved -- the two are inseparably intertwined. It is impossible to disentangle religious elements from the ethnic cultures of Jews, Lithuanians, Ukrainians or the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, although, of course, the Soviets try to do precisely that.

The National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, as its name implies, is principally concerned with the dangerous situation of Soviet Jews. Why, one might ask, did it convene hearings on the plight of groups quite unlike the Jews. It is often stated that the oppression of Jews in the USSR can be resolved by Soviet compliance with a single human right: the right to emigrate. Soviet Jews do not seek the liberalization of their society, they simply seek the right to leave it, to emigrate to Israel or the West, to be reunited with their family members who have already done so, and to end the 2,000-year-old chapter of Jewish life on the soil of the present-day Soviet empire. For that empire has made impossible the continued survival on its territory of Jews as Jews. The Jewish struggle for culture, community and religious liberty is a struggle to leave and to achieve those blessings elsewhere. The struggle of the various Christian and Muslim groups seek for the most part the achievement of their goals at home.

While this argument is generally true and the Task Force remains committed, in concert with other groups, to securing for Soviet Jews their right to emigrate, the Task Force also believes that there is room

for multiple strategies toward this end. The Task Force was founded in 1972 by the American Jewish Committee and the Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice, and has been directed since its inception by a Catholic nun, Sister Ann Gillen, S.H.C.J. The Task Force is the child of two quiet revolutions that have taken place since the end of World War II.

The first is the movement in Christian-Jewish relations from confrontation and persecution toward cooperation and respect. The Task Force is a unique sign and beneficiary of this revolution. Under the leadership of Sr. Ann, hundreds of thousands of people during the last 14 years have witnessed committed Christians working on behalf of persecuted Jews. The Task Force has brought an acute awareness of the problem of Soviet Jewry to the Vatican, to the Protestant world and to grass-roots congregations. In keeping with its ecumenical origins, it is natural for the Task Force to cooperate with other groups concerned for their communities in the Soviet Union. Anatoly Shcharansky has reported on the solidarity in the camps of activists from various religions and backgrounds and on the Soviets' attempts to "divide and conquer" by exploiting traditional prejudices. Interreligious and interethnic cooperation has proven fruitful. Its fruits are evident in these testimonies.

The second revolution of which the Task Force is a beneficiary is the international human-rights movement that has developed since World War II. For the first time, governments' treatment of human persons is no longer normatively considered to be a purely internal matter. The human person has become a factor in international relations and a desideratum in international law. States no longer relate to one another solely on the basis of treaties; through the adoption of the various UN covenants and, in the case of Europe and North America, the Helsinki Final Act, they have obligated themselves to a humane international order grounded on human rights. Although the act is routinely violated, the fact remains that its human-rights provisions are norms that have begun to penetrate international consciousness. The human-rights movement is, significantly, a lay movement, an international network of information-gathering, public-education and activist organizations. In the democracies, human-rights activists bring human-rights violators to account before the bar of international public opinion and seek to influence their own governments' policies toward the offending states. The Task Force stands squarely within this movement. As such, it tends to place the problem of Soviet Jewry within the broad context of human rights. Again, it finds the linkage of Jewish with other Soviet minority concerns a natural one.

As an interreligious, human-rights organization, then, the Task Force works both to raise public awareness of Soviet human-rights violations, particularly with respect to Soviet Jews, and to build coalitions of conscience with like-minded groups. These are the reasons for the hearings at which the following testimony was presented.

Without entering into the technical aspects of the human-rights problems reported on in the testimony, a few context-setting remarks are in order. If any underlying theme can be said to unify the following contributions, it is the conviction that the fundamental conflict in the world today is not between peoples or economic systems but between regimes that protect freedom and those that suppress it. The conflict, on the level of ideas, if not of geopolitics, is between states that root their legitimacy in protecting human rights and states that understand themselves as ends in themselves and therefore unlimited in what they can demand of their citizens.

Religious freedom, and the freedom of cultural expression to which it is linked, is the mother of all freedoms. When a state affirms religious freedom, it relinquishes any claim to control the minds of its citizens; it concedes that loyalty to the state must not be incompatible with higher loyalties. The Soviet Union and its client states are unable or unwilling to grant that kind of radical freedom. It is in the logic of the Soviet system for the state to be the shaper of conscience and values, the ultimate arbiter of human worth. This pretense cannot coexist with freedom of religion in the true sense. The guarantees of the Soviet constitution and the obligations of international agreements to uphold freedom of religion are undermined by both the idea and the reality of the Soviet polity.

To assert this, one hopes, is not to preclude the possibility of meaningful change for Soviet citizens. At this point in history, however, there are few grounds for optimism. Nevertheless, because there are heroes there is hope. Names such as Sakharov, Shcharansky, Orlov and others to be found below indicate that the will toward freedom cannot be annihilated in the USSR. It is the hope of the Task Force that the process of collecting and disseminating this testimony will in some way strengthen that will. As an ancient Jewish proverb puts it, "It is not your obligation to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from beginning it."

HELSINKI MONITORING GROUPS

Testimony by
Yuri Yarim-Agaev
Former Member, Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group

Our job in America, as recently expelled dissidents, is to keep people sober-minded about the Soviet Union. There are several surface phenomena that take too much of Western peoples' attention and cause too much speculation about the changes in the USSR.

I refer, first of all, to the change of Soviet leaders. This is not important -- all of them are products and instruments of the same political system. They get to and stay in power only if they fit perfectly to its demands.

Nor are changes in rhetoric and international documents signed by the Soviets important.

Symbolic gestures, such as the permission given to several thousands of Jews to emigrate or the release to the West of several imprisoned dissidents, are finally not important either. Those are Russian souvenirs sold to the West. You can buy them, but you can hardly make any conclusions about the real state of Soviet life by looking at them.

To get real, conclusive information about the Soviet system is very difficult even for the Soviet people. To disclose it to others is very dangerous. Yet for more than 20 years there have been people in the USSR who have dared to learn the truth and who have succeeded in making it public. All together they are called the "human rights movement." The movement became best organized in the form of Helsinki Monitoring Groups, which were created soon after the Soviet Union signed the Agreement on Cooperation and Security in Europe in 1975.

The main achievement of the human-rights movement in the USSR is the systematic collecting and disclosing of first-hand, reliable information on the Soviet government's observance or nonobservance of rights guaranteed by the Helsinki accords. In doing so, the human-

rights activists have identified the parameters that determine the level of political freedom in society.

These major parameters are:

1. The number of prisoners of conscience
2. The level of psychiatric abuse for political purposes
3. The conditions of prisons, labor camps, psychiatric hospitals
4. The implementation of internal laws by Soviet authorities
5. The compliance of these laws with international agreements and principles
6. The openness of the society
7. The level of secrecy
8. The level of government censorship
9. The restrictions on religious activities
10. The restrictions on national and ethnic culture and education
11. The extent of the human-rights movement itself in the country

I did not include here any parameters characterizing Soviet international policy. Also economic and even social-economic problems are beyond our consideration. The above-mentioned parameters describe only the direct interference by the government into different parts of social life. For example, I do not speak about the level of art, literature, etc., which might depend on the existence of talented people, I speak only about the level of government censorship.

The last parameter -- the extent of the human-rights movement -- is very important. We need this parameter because the level of information on all of the other parameters depends directly on whether the people who collect this information still exist. For example, in 1981 we learned less about the abuse of psychiatry in the USSR not because it really declined but because all the members of the Working Group to Investigate the Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Purposes were arrested. Analogously, had the Soviets succeeded in silencing all the activists of the Jewish emigration movement, they would have claimed that the problem of emigration does not exist because nobody wishes to emigrate from the USSR.

Despite the Soviet authorities' success in stemming the flow of information, the evidence and documents that reach us show that the situation in the Soviet Union is worsening in all the above areas.

By the middle of the 1970s human-rights activists had succeeded in compiling a list of political prisoners. They knew by name about a thousand people. Since that time, the list has been published annually and reveals each year a gradual increase.

The same is true about the number of people incarcerated in psychiatric prisons.

The worsening of conditions for prisoners is clearly indicated by two facts: (1) The authorities have started to use direct torture on political prisoners. Two victims were Sergei Khodorovich, coordinator of the Russian Public Fund to Help Political Prisoners, and Anatoly Koryagin, member of the Working Group to Investigate the Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Purposes. (2) The mortality rate in places of detention has increased. In 1984, Tikhy, Litvin, and Marchenko, members of the Helsinki Watch Group from the Ukraine, and Edward Arutyunyan, from Armenia, all died in prisons.

All the laws and regulations contradicting international covenants on human rights remained in the criminal code and other documents. New laws, including one providing prison administrators the right to extend sentences, were introduced.

Crucial steps were undertaken by the authorities to further close the country. Every year more scientific institutions become secret. Every year the number of scientists allowed to communicate with Western colleagues decreases. The persecution for publishing in the West has been expanded.

Also expanded was the scope of cultural activities subject to direct persecution -- for example, the teaching of Hebrew. Christians are subject to strong repression, and new waves of repression are being directed against Jews and Moslems.

The crackdown on the human-rights movement continues. Sakharov, Orlov, and most other dissidents are still in prison or exile.

The change of Soviet leaders over this decade did not have any positive impact on the situation. The trend continues; nothing has improved since Gorbachev came to power. Two recent examples illustrate this.

On March 29, 1985, Vyacheslav Bakhmin, a member of the Working Group to Investigate the Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Purposes, was sentenced to three years in a strict-regime labor camp. He had already served two terms for his human-rights activity. After his release he pursued only his professional activity as a computer scientist. Nonetheless, he was arrested and sentenced again.

Also on March 29, 1985, Lev Timoffev, a scholar and journalist, was arrested. He faces a sentence of seven years in a strict-regime labor

camp only because a play and several articles by him were published abroad.

There are volumes of well-documented information on all the above-mentioned issues. The compilation of these documents costs the freedom and even the lives of many courageous and intelligent people in the Soviet Union. But it has become more difficult to collect current information. To answer this need, we are creating a new Center for Democracy whose primary goals will be to maintain communication with people inside the Soviet Union, to ensure the rapid exchange of the information here in the West, and to deliver it to all interested parties in proper form. The main question, however, is: Will the Western people listen to these facts or will they prefer to be misled by new Soviet rhetoric and some symbolic, perhaps even positive gestures?



SOVIET JEWS (I)

Testimony by
Richard J. Rice,
Chair, Chicago Conference of Soviet Jewry

After the 1917 revolution, when Lenin was organizing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, it was decided that Jews should be treated as a nationality like the roughly 100 other nationality groups within the USSR. Jews, however, were different from the others in that they had no homeland within the landmass of the Soviet Union. Still, they were to enjoy the same rights as all others, including the right to teach their language and culture to their children. A Soviet "homeland," Birobijan, was assigned to them. Few Jews went to Birobijan, however, located as it was in a particularly inhospitable part of the Soviet Far East. Even there, they never enjoyed linguistic and cultural rights.

Fifty years after the revolution, Jews were brought to the heights of a new-found Jewish national pride with Israel's stunning victory in the Six-Day War of 1967. After incalculable suffering during the Holocaust and severe repression under Stalin, Soviet Jews examined anew their relationship to the world Jewish people. They wanted to learn more about their Jewishness, and hundreds of thousands determined that they should be living in the Jewish homeland. The Soviets themselves acknowledged in 1948 that that homeland was Israel.

The pressure from Soviet Jews for permission to leave the Soviet Union and be repatriated to Israel began in the late sixties. Few were permitted to leave during the early seventies, but procedures were established and regularized, so that when the Soviets signed the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, it appeared that they were serious about permitting Jewish emigration.

Jews became more interested in rediscovering their language and culture and religion. This newly awakened interest was shared by many Jews who did not intend to emigrate. In major Jewish population centers, Jewish study groups arose. Jews learned and taught each other Jewish

culture and language. At first these Jewish seminars were tolerated. Now they have been shut down. Instruction and learning continue, however, because the Jews' passion for knowledge about themselves and their people cannot be extinguished. Today instruction is on a one-to-one basis. It is too dangerous to bring a group of Jews together. There are places where even one-to-one instruction is too dangerous, so instruction is by cassette tape. The danger is very real. For more than a year, one Hebrew teacher after another has been arrested on trumped-up charges. On the average, one Hebrew teacher per month has been sent to Siberia.

This Jewish renaissance was viewed with alarm by Soviet officials. Official anti-Semitism, although expressly forbidden by the Soviet constitution, was reinstated. Scurrilous charges that Jews had conspired with the Nazis to cause World War II appeared in books, the daily press, and on television. This may have been an attempt to lower the Jewish self-image and punish this community in general. But the total effect can be more dangerous than that. It would not be the first time that the Jews were made the scapegoat for all the ills of the nation. Anti-Semitism has been present among the peoples who inhabit the Soviet Union from the distant past until recent times. The healing process between victims and perpetrators is not yet complete.

Official anti-Semitism is being felt in very concrete ways. Few Jews are now being admitted to the finest universities in the Soviet Union. It has been proved that there are, in some cases, two admissions tests for universities: one for most students, another for Jews. Jewish young people know that there are few opportunities for them if they stay in the Soviet Union.

For those who apply to leave, the situation becomes even worse. They are routinely demoted or dismissed from their jobs. If their applications are refused, and the vast majority are, they face a most uncertain future. We know of a man who has been a refusenik for 19 years. He is denied a normal life in the Soviet Union, denied the opportunity of seeking such a life in his homeland, and his only "crime" is that he wishes to be Jewish and live in Israel!

Jews fear they are being held hostage for use in some international power game. Unlike other nationalities whose homelands are now part of the Soviet Union, Jews do not seek to change the USSR, they only want to leave it. Only by leaving will they be able to express their ethnic and religious heritage and pride. Only by leaving can they escape the new and worrisome anti-Semitism. Only by leaving can they hope to secure a future for their children.

SOVIET JEWS (II)

Testimony by
Judy Balint
Chair, Seattle Action for Soviet Jewry

The situation facing Soviet Jews today is more difficult than in any other time in recent memory. Of those presently serving terms in prison for their desire to study their culture and practice their faith, 70 percent have been arrested and convicted in the last two years and one has been convicted every month since Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. The police methods employed in some of these cases were crude, even by Soviet standards, and involved, among other things, the planting of incriminating evidence. Wide-ranging searches were conducted in scores of homes in connection with these cases and involved the seizure of Hebrew instructional material as well as religious articles and books.

With respect to emigration, 1,140 Jews left the USSR in 1985. You might recall that more than 51,000 were permitted to leave in 1979. Nearly 400,000 Jews have requested the necessary documentation to begin the process of applying for emigration, and so the problem of the refuseniks grows ever larger.

Media attacks on Jews, Judaism and Zionism grow. And the net effect is that we who live in the West are today witnesses to a deliberate Soviet policy to bring about the disappearance of 15 percent of world Jewry, some 2.5 million Jews.

For the purposes of this hearing, let me zero in on two basic aspects of this complex and disturbing reality: first, the religious and cultural oppression of Jews in the Soviet Union; and second, the human contacts between the Jews of the Western world and those in the USSR.

FACT: Of the 119 nationalities in the Soviet Union, 118 have their own cultural institutions, theaters, printing houses and publications, and schools and instruction in their national languages. Only the Jews,

the 12th-largest national minority in the USSR, are denied these rights.

FACT: Not one book on Jewish history, except for a series dealing with the ancient period, has been published in the USSR since 1930, according to a letter to the Soviet Communist Party from 125 leading Soviet Jewish activists. Books on Jewish subjects published overseas are not sold in the USSR, and Jewish books are often confiscated from foreign tourists by Soviet customs officials.

FACT: Although Jews have lived in the area of the USSR for 2,000 years, and had become the largest Jewish community in the world until this century, there is not one museum dealing with Jewish history, culture, or ethnography, and no existing Soviet museum has a special section dealing with these subjects. Not a single paragraph about Jews appears in school textbooks.

FACT: According to a 1926 survey, over 1,000 synagogues operated in the USSR. Today, they number about 50. It is not uncommon to find a synagogue closed or barricaded by the KGB to prevent entry. None of the remaining synagogues have been permitted to join with other synagogues in regional or international associations. The Soviet Union has no operating seminary to train rabbis.

FACT: Jewish children are not allowed to receive formal religious instruction in the USSR.

FACT: There is one yeshiva in the entire country and only 10 students, chosen by the government, are allowed to study there. In 1918, there were over 200 Jewish schools and seven Jewish institutes of higher education in the Ukraine alone.

FACT: There is no official instruction in Hebrew in the Soviet Union, save a few courses for foreign-service and security officers -- barred to Jews. Unofficial instruction in Hebrew has also been prohibited by Soviet authorities. Dr. Joseph Begun was arrested and received a sentence of seven years in prison and five years in Siberian exile for teaching Hebrew and distributing Jewish cultural information. Other private Hebrew instructors have been arrested.

FACT: Only two newspapers are published in Yiddish and only one, Sovietish Heimland, is distributed nationally (only 7,000 copies are distributed inside the USSR). No publications in Hebrew are allowed. Even the Hebrew newsletter of the Israeli Communist Party is not distributed in the Soviet Union.

Our next topic is human contacts. Official Soviet interference with people-to-people contact between ordinary Soviet citizens and citizens of Western countries has been well documented in various sources. The U.S. Department of State in a July 1984 bulletin concerning changes in the Soviet criminal code regarding contact with foreigners stated:

Another article of the criminal code ("Anti-Soviet Agitation and Propaganda") frequently used as the basis of criminal charges against political and religious dissidents -- including Jews seeking emigration -- has been more broadly defined and changed to make the acceptance of funds or other material aid from abroad an aggravating circumstance allowing the imposition of a heavier sentence.

The trend to restrict contacts between Soviet citizens and foreigners continued when a USSR decree of May 25, 1984, established fines for Soviet citizens who invite foreigners to stay overnight in their homes or help arrange their transportation needs "in violation of the established regulations."

How these changes in criminal law will be implemented in the post-Andropov period remains to be seen. Their very existence, however, is sure to have a chilling effect on contacts between Soviet citizens and foreigners. Their enforcement could place at risk all Soviet citizens who engage in unofficial contacts with foreigners and so affect those who travel to the USSR as tourists or to meet relatives or who engage in business, exchange or academic activities there.

Moscow's effort to isolate its citizenry from foreign contacts was also evident in the June 1981 Law on the Status of Foreigners in the USSR, which included a section on the expulsion or criminal prosecution of foreigners found guilty of transgressing "...rules of the socialist community [or] the traditions and customs of the Soviet people or of endangering state security." Now, the USSR has laws aimed against both foreigners and Soviet citizens who engage in unofficial contacts.

The experiences of tourists attempting to visit refuseniks and families of Jewish prisoners have borne this out. In the interests of time, I will just use two or three illustrations from visits during the past year.

Suddenly the doorbell sounded. We quickly put on our coats and hats. A policeman in uniform and a plainclothesman entered. The uniformed man did most of the talking (in Russian, not Lithuanian, we think). He did not speak English. He asked us if we spoke Russian; we showed him our hotel cards and photocopies of our passports (our actual passports were being held at the hotel). He jotted down some information.

The two men escorted us outside. We thought they were taking us to the police station, but they merely pointed us in the direction of the hotel. As we walked away, the uniformed man warned us to behave (in Russian, as though we understood).

When we returned to the Hotel Leituva, one of the ladies at the Intourist service bureau desk asked us to come with her to meet the manager of the hotel. She translated for us. "You have very heavy bags for tourists," he said. "What is the purpose of your visit?" Tourism, we said. "I have received a report on you from the Lenin Precinct of the Militia. You have been visiting Jewish people. This is forbidden. If you continue to do this, your tour will be canceled." We told him that we had been checking on relatives of friends of ours in America who wanted to know how their kinfolk were doing. He added a stern warning and let us go. (From Rabbis Levine and Katz, Massachusetts. Trip taken January 1985)

Indeed, the 18th Semiannual Report on the Implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, reviewing compliance between October 1984 to April 1985, states: "Visitors who attempt to see refuseniks or dissidents, or who bring in religious articles or literary materials are subject to harassment. Soviet authorities are seeking to define tourism in an increasingly narrow way which rules out contact with any Soviet citizens other than in meetings arranged by tourist agencies" (page 29).

Contact with refuseniks through the mail is also extremely difficult and haphazard. Again, this has been meticulously documented by Rep. Ben Gilman in his report entitled "A History of the Soviet Union's Deliberate Interference with the Flow of Mail" (Committee Print No. 99-5, July 1985). In a recent pamphlet prepared by the International Postal Affairs Department of the U.S. Postal Service, "Mailing to the Soviet Union," the introductory paragraphs state: "...repeatedly, mailers report that their letters and parcels to persons in the Soviet Union never arrive, or are returned or seized for specious reasons. The cause of these difficulties appears to lie in the Soviet way of government and rarely in the kind of innocent postal or mailer mistake which can occur anywhere. In fact, Congressional investigations have concluded that Soviet authorities systematically interfere with mail to certain addresses and groups for political reasons."

The most blatant and recent abuse of a citizen's right to use the mails is that of Vladimir Lifschitz of Leningrad. Lifschitz, whom I had the privilege of meeting last October, was sentenced to a three-year prison term on March 19, 1986. The evidence against him consisted of seven letters he had sent to (1) Gorbachev and Gromyko, (2) Western Communist parties, (3) the Committee for Aliya of the Israeli Knesset, and (4) an appeal to the Jews of the United States that was published in the Wall Street Journal in January 1985. Clearly, in order for the contents of these letters to be deemed anti-Soviet slander, the authorities had to intercept his mail and read it. During the trial, Soviet law was cited that permits the opening of correspondence to investigate whether currency or other forbidden items are being sent abroad. When the defense attorney countered that mail interception is contrary to the International Postal Convention, he was simply ignored by the court.

The bitter irony of having one's mail to the West used as a pretext for a three-year prison term, when the Kremlin is publicly promoting increased citizen exchanges (on their terms, of course), is not lost on the refusenik community. They are willing to endure the calculating taunts of the Soviet system in their quest for repatriation and emigration. We can do no less than give them our full support for this goal.



ROMAN CATHOLICS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Testimony by
Sr. Ann Gillen
Executive Director, National Interreligious
Task Force on Soviet Jewry

Roman Catholics exist today as a heavily repressed majority in Lithuania (approximately 75 percent Catholic, formerly 85 or 90 percent), as an underground, banned church in the Ukraine, and as a small minority in Latvia and other areas of the USSR.

This survey reports on the two largest groupings of Catholics about whom more is known, thanks to samizdat publications and the dedicated work of emigre groups in the West.

ROMAN CATHOLICS IN THE UKRAINE

The Ukrainian Catholic or Uniate Church was dealt sledgehammer blows during 1939-41. This church, founded in 1596, numbered 5 million persons before the Soviet onslaught; however, in less than two years, all monasteries, convents, church schools, publications, charitable institutions and lay organizations were suppressed. Three seminaries were closed and all church property was nationalized.

Then, on April 11, 1945, the NKVD (forerunner of the KGB) arrested the entire hierarchy of that Catholic church, plus hundreds of clergy and lay leaders. Out of 3,600 priests and monks, only 216 remained to attend the staged synod that dissolved the Ukrainian Catholic Church, covering the suppression of religious freedom in the Ukraine with a facade of legality. Rightly, Ukrainian leaders speak of the genocide of that Catholic church as well as of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which was forcibly taken over by the Russian Orthodox Church.¹

In a report, The Church of the Martyrs, Cardinal Slipyj stated:

In spite of the persecution that has now been going on for 35

years we can gratefully declare that our church, condemned to perish, is not only alive but growing, both in the western and the eastern Ukraine and everywhere in the Soviet Union where our deportees are living, especially in Siberia.

Our Church numbers at least 4 million faithful in the Soviet Union who have remained true to Rome. Their faith is so strong that it bears rich fruit: we have priests, monks, sisters, numerous vocations and a clandestine hierarchy. The atheistic system has not succeeded in destroying the faith.²

The church has survived in the Ukraine thanks to the sacrifices and suffering of laity as well as clergy. Yosyp Terelia, dedicated lay leader, wrote on a scrap of cloth to Pope Paul VI on March 6, 1977:

Bitter times have come for the Greek-Catholic Church in the Ukraine. We, the faithful of this Church, are compelled to have our children baptized in secret, to marry, to confess, and to be buried in secret. Our priests groan in labor camps and psychiatric wards.... I live in a country in which it is a crime to be a Christian. Never before have the faithful of the Church of Christ been exposed to such persecutions as today. The Ukrainian Catholics have been deprived of everything: ordinary family life, freedom of speech, the celebration of our Church's liturgy. We are in the catacombs! For the living word of God, the living spirit is crucified. Of the 34 years of my life I have spent 14 in prisons, concentration camps and psychiatric.³

Five Ukrainian Catholics, among them Yosyp Terelia, founded the Action Group for the Defense of the Rights of Believers and the Church on September 9, 1982. Their goal was the legalization of the banned Ukrainian Catholic Church. Two samizdat publications (The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Ukraine and The Ukrainian Catholic Herald) reported developments. Ukrainian Catholics began to burn their internal passports, saying "Of what value are these? Even with them we can be sent to prison camps."

Terelia's dialogue with the authorities was described in the sixth issue of the Chronicle. Terelia recalled conversations of April 23-24, 1984, with representatives of the government, the Communist Party, atheist educators, and the KGB in Uzhgorod, who urged him to register his church. He replied by citing the advantages of the illegal status quo: "...presently the Ukrainian Catholic Church is not under your control and we make the decisions concerning our own matters.... I do want legalization, but not the kind that you're offering."

In other issues of the Chronicle, Terelia explained that during his terms of imprisonment from December 24, 1982, to December 1983, he had become an opponent of legalization, realizing that legal status as presently defined and implemented by the Soviet authorities constricts

religious liberty to a bare minimum of liturgical worship surrounded by a multitude of suspicious state monitors and controlled by a state Committee for Religious Affairs (CRA).

Yosyp Terelia, heroic confessor of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, was arrested on February 8, 1985, and sentenced to seven years in a labor camp and five years in internal exile on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

ROMAN CATHOLICS IN LITHUANIA

Thanks to another samizdat, The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, written in secret at great risk by unknown Lithuanian Catholics and published by dedicated Western emigre members of that church, there has been since 1972 an objective account of what legal status means for Lithuanian Catholics. Sixty-five issues of the samizdat Chronicle have now been published, the most recent dated April 17, 1985 (its American publication date being February 16, 1986). It is a volume of 63 pages with a special 32-page supplement of classified documents on religion in Lithuania. One therefore has the opportunity to compare the reports of the repressed and the repressers in some specific instances.

The Chronicle opens with an historical review of church data:

In 1940, when the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania by force, 85% of the country's more than 3 million inhabitants were Roman Catholics, 4.5% Protestant, 7.3 Jewish, 2.5% Orthodox, and 0.2% of other persuasions.

In the two archdioceses and four dioceses were: 708 churches, 314 chapels, 73 monasteries, 85 convents, three archbishops, nine bishops, 1271 diocesan priests, 580 monks, of whom 168 were priests. Four seminaries had 470 students. There were 950 nuns.⁵

At this point it may be helpful to insert the current statistics taken from a classified Soviet government report:

CLASSIFIED SOVIET DOCUMENT (Copy 122) REGARDING THE SITUATION OF RELIGION AND THE CHURCH IN THE LITHUANIAN SSR AS OF JANUARY 1, 1984

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In the republic, as in former years, there are 630 Catholic religious associations operating, which are divided among 40 deaneries. All the parishes belong to their respective religious centers -- archdioceses and dioceses, of which there are six in the republic: the Archdiocese of Kaunas and the Diocese of Vilkaviskis under the leadership of Archbishop

Liudas Povilonis (he is also President of the Bishop's Conference of Lithuania); the Diocese of Panevezys, headed by its administrator, Kazimieras Dulksyns (former pastor of the church of Krakana), elected administrator May 9, 1983.

Bishop Romualdas Kriksciunas was removed from office by the Vatican in April 1983. The Archdiocese of Vilnius is headed by its administrator, the Reverend Algirdas Gutauskas, the Diocese of Telsiai by Bishop Antanas Vaicius, Kaisiadorys by Bishop Vicentas Sladkevicius. Bishop Julijonas Steponavicius is still working as a clergyman at the church in Zagare.

Catholic religious associations are served by 693 priests (in 1982, 694). During 1983, 16 priests died. During the past year, the number of religious associations which do not have a clergyman and are served by priests from neighboring parishes increased again. By year's end, there were 144 churches without priests (1982, 139). The largest number of parishes without priests is in the Diocese of Telsiai (56), the fewest in Kaisiadorys.

In the Theological Seminary at Kaunas as of January 1, 1984, there were 104 seminarians studying. During the past year, 28 young men were admitted to the seminary. During 1983, 12 seminarians were ordained to the priesthood.

Churches are served by 602 (in 1982, 647) individuals: 195 organists, 145 sacristans, 190 janitors, 35 watchmen, 31 bell-ringers and 6 furnace-tenders.

Catholic religious associations during 1983 had a total income of 1,530,200 rubles (in 1982, 1,282,800 rubles). They allotted 24,100 to the Peace Fund.

Catholic Calendar-Directory for 1983 of seven folios in color was published in an edition of 4000 copies. Three volumes of the missal in Lithuanian have already been printed.

Church attendance during 1983 was at the level of the previous year. Most people (more or less 300,000) gather in church during the big religious holidays (Easter and Christmas). No few believers come to religious festivals at the so-called shrines. Siluva was visited by about 37,000 people. Varduva by about 30,000 and Vepriari by between 2,500 and 3,000 believers. At Siluva and Varduva, the festivals last a week during July and September, and at Vepriai, for one day at Pentecost.⁶

After the 1940 takeover of Lithuania, Soviet authorities attacked the church, confiscating parish lands, cutting off clergy salaries, confiscating savings, closing printing plants, destroying religious

books, forbidding the teaching of religion and the recitation of prayers in the schools, nationalizing all schools and closing two seminaries. One year later, on June 28, 1941, 34,260 Lithuanians were deported; those deportations continued after the war until 1953.

By 1947 only one bishop remained, the others having suffered death or deportation. Religious institutions had been closed, their members dispersed. As the Chronicle notes, only after Stalin's death was there "a slight improvement," some bishops being allowed to return but not to minister to the people. Subsequently more bishops were consecrated with the state's approval. Apparently the authorities had learned that the former policy had failed. From the fifties onward, a new strategy was devised, applying pressure in a selective, punitive fashion.

How does the Soviet government accomplish these ends? The Soviet constitution, art. 124, states: "In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the Church in the USSR is separate from the State, and the school from the Church."⁷ In practice, however, this does not ensure freedom for the church, since the article is interpreted to mean that the church may not interfere with the state but not vice versa.

Through the CRA, all aspects of church life are closely scrutinized, supervised and curtailed wherever possible with the cooperation of the school system and the KGB. In practice, the state dominates the church and directs antireligious propaganda toward its eventual elimination. In a press release issued when the documents of Chronicle no. 66 first reached the West, Ginte Damusis, associate director of Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, stated that the 18 pages of documents "reaffirm what we already know" but that for the first time "we have the information from the persecutors." The press release continues:

According to the documents, the provisions for administrative surveillance were laid down in a statute issued September 20, 1974, by the Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic.

It states the "most important assignments of the groups are to constantly monitor the activities of religious associations and clergy ... who are forbidden ... to take part in charitable activities ... to organize meetings for religious study ... to print or disseminate religious or other literature, to organize excursions or children's facilities, to open libraries, reading rooms or museums ... to conduct religious processions to so-called 'holy shrines'...."

The extent of surveillance activity is disclosed in a 1983 synopsis of priests' sermons in Lithuania. According to the report, "Many priests have lately been paying much attention to the catechization of youth. They are attempting to present the church as the only messenger of truth and morality...."

Damuis said 40 sermons have been monitored by individuals who take notes or tape the sermons, then report to the Council for Religious Affairs. She said in some cases the sermons are being used against priests in criminal proceedings.

In 1983, for example, Frs. Alfonsas Svariskas of Vidulke and Sigitas Tamkevicius of Kybartai were sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for "anti-Soviet" sermons. In January, Fr. Jonas-Kastytis Matulionis of Kybartai was imprisoned for leading an illegal religious procession on All Souls' Day.

In addition the same petition cites as well "the old painful wound" -- the government's unjustified confiscation of the Catholic Church at Klaipeda.⁸

In conclusion, the Catholic Church in Lithuania is making great sacrifices to maintain what small degree of religious liberty is permitted to it. It is also seeking to recover some of the freedoms unjustly taken from it by the Communist authorities, protesting unconstitutional acts by the state, and claiming religious rights under church canon law and international law.

NOTES

1. Report of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, April 27-28, 1977, p. 78.
2. Joysf Slipyj, The Church of the Martyrs (Konigstein: Aid to the Church in Need, 1981), p. 77
3. Ibid., p. 10.
4. Quoted in Andrew Sorokowski, "Ukrainian Catholics Face Legalization Dilemma," America, Aug. 19, 1985, p. 4.
5. Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, no. 66 (Feb. 16, 1986), p. 1.
6. Ibid., p. A12.
7. E. L. Johnson, An Introduction to the Soviet Legal System (London: Methuen, 1969), p. 101.
8. Catholic Telegraph, Aug. 30, 1985, p. 9.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN LITHUANIA

Testimony by
Ginte Damusis

Lithuanian Information Center

When one speaks of Roman Catholicism in the Soviet Union, one speaks of Lithuanian Catholics: they form the majority of Western-rite Soviet Catholics. By conservative estimates, there are 4 million Western-rite and 8 million Eastern-rite Catholics in the Soviet Union.

Lithuania is the only predominantly Roman Catholic republic in the Soviet Union. Seventy-five percent of Lithuania's 3.5 million people are still practicing Catholics. Roman Catholic minorities exist in Belorussia and Latvia. Pockets of German, Polish and Lithuanian Catholics can be found in Siberia and Soviet Central Asia.

Unlike the Catholic Church in Lithuania, the Eastern-rite Ukrainian Catholic (also known as the Uniate or Greek Catholic) Church is illegal. Ukrainian Catholics, located primarily in the western Ukraine, are attempting to obtain state recognition of their religious community.

The Soviet government has been unrelenting in its hostility to the Catholic Church in the USSR. Successive waves of persecution demonstrate the government's desire to destroy organized Catholicism there.

Several reasons can be suggested for this hostility: the church's continued resistance to the restrictive Regulations on Religious Associations, particularly to the prohibition of religious instruction of youth; its relative invulnerability to "Sovietization"; its close association with Western-oriented national minorities, especially the Poles; and above all, Catholics' ties to the Vatican.

This negative evaluation of the Catholic Church is reinforced by the awareness of its close identification with Lithuanian national aspirations.

THE EMERGENCE OF CATHOLIC DISSENT

After World War II, the Soviet authorities took various steps aimed at suppressing the Catholic Church in Lithuania. They arrested, deported and executed many priests; closed a number of churches, especially in the major cities; and implemented a policy of swift reprisals against any manifestations of religion. By the mid-1960s, the situation had reached a point where many Lithuanian Catholics felt something had to be done to counteract this onslaught by the state.

In 1968 several Lithuanian priests wrote letters to officials in Moscow protesting arbitrary government restrictions on the training of clergy. The individual letters became petitions signed by most of the priests in the different dioceses of the republic. Eventually, an appeal to Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev for greater religious freedom was signed by as many as 17,054 persons. This document gained worldwide attention when it was sent to Kurt Waldheim, secretary-general of the United Nations, with a request that he present it to Brezhnev. Unfortunately, the petitions did not achieve what the signers sought; rather, they seem to have been answered with a new wave of repressions, culminating in the arrests and trials of three priests in 1970 and 1971 for giving religious instruction to children. Authorities were determined to break the protest movement at its inception by singling out and punishing suspected leaders.

When the campaign of mass petitions failed, Lithuanian Catholics turned to alternative methods of dissent. On March 19, 1972, the feast day of St. Joseph, publication of the unofficial Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania began. This publication probably followed the example of the Russian samizdat publication, The Chronicle of Current Events. The KGB set about trying to discover the authors and editors of the Lithuanian Chronicle, making extensive searches, conducting numerous interrogations, and placing many persons under arrest over the years. It was, however, unable to stop publication of the Chronicle or to learn the identity of its editors. In fact, by April 1985, 65 consecutive issues of the Chronicle had reached the West.

The year 1972 was a turning point for the Lithuanian human-rights movement. Following the appearance of the UN petition, Romas Kalanta immolated himself on May 14 to protest Soviet oppression of his country. Though not directly motivated by religious concerns, Kalanta's tragic end triggered mass demonstrations in Kaunas demanding national and religious freedom and ending in clashes between youthful demonstrators and the police.

GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS

The Lithuanian government stood firm in the face of these overt signs of dissatisfaction among Catholics. On July 28, 1976, it adopted

a new set of regulations on religious associations that was being introduced throughout the USSR. Many of the provisions of these regulations were unacceptable to the Lithuanian Catholic clergy. They charged that the state was trying to strangle the church by administrative means.

On December 25, 1978, the recently formed Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights strongly condemned the regulations, pointing out that in part they violated the Soviet constitution, the canon law of the church, and various international agreements to which the USSR subscribed. Within several months about three-fourths of the Catholic priests in Lithuania (522 priests and the two exiled bishops) signed statements approving the positions set forth by the Catholic Committee. Four years later, 468 out of 701 priests in Lithuania reaffirmed this position in a statement to the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Leonid Brezhnev. This displays the remarkable sense of unity among the clergy as well as their resolve to resist further government encroachments on their rights.

The campaign of mass petitions was never abandoned; on the contrary, it has become even more popular. In early 1979 as many as 148,000 Lithuanians signed a petition requesting the restoration of the Mary Queen of Peace Church in Klaipeda, which had been converted into a philharmonic hall.

In 1983, 123,000 Lithuanians petitioned Yuri Andropov for the release of two imprisoned Catholic priests. Attempts to deliver the petition to Moscow were twice thwarted by authorities.

But it is the Chronicle that continues to be the chief organ of the Lithuanian Catholic dissent movement. It has proved itself to be interested not only in the survival of its own church but in the establishment of freedom for others. The Chronicle reports events that the Western press then publicizes, and Western radio stations beam information about them back to Lithuania and the Soviet Union.

SHIFTS IN POLICY

For instance, the Chronicle noted that state policy toward religion changed altogether under Andropov, when he obviously decided it was time to quash the one body of religious dissent in the USSR that had eluded arrests -- the Catholic Committee. On January 26, 1983, one of its founding members, Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, was arrested. Another member, Father Sigitas Tamkevicius, was arrested at Svarinskas' trial in May 1983. Both were sentenced to 10-year terms. In over 60 documents sent to government and church authorities, this group defended the rights not only of Catholic but also of Russian Orthodox and other believers, and it has been a leader in the movement for revocation of restrictive antireligious legislation. The group's remaining members have been searched, harassed, privately and publicly warned, and placed

under great pressure to resign. As a result, the Committee has been forced underground.

Since then, a third priest has been imprisoned. Father Jonas-Kastytis Matulionis was sentenced to three years in a general-regime camp for organizing a traditional religious procession to honor the dead.

CONTINUING PROBLEMS AND CRACKDOWNS

Since 1980, the Soviet authorities have devoted considerable attention to preventing public manifestations of religion, especially religious processions. These are regarded by the government as potentially explosive anti-Soviet demonstrations; however, to date they have always been peaceful. Three people accused of organizing pilgrimages were sentenced in 1980 and 1981 to up to three years for "disturbing the peace and obstructing traffic." It was hardly accidental that the two men imprisoned, Mécislovas Jurevicius and Vytautas Vaiciunas, were Helsinki monitors.

The Soviets have already dismantled the Lithuanian Helsinki Group. The last surviving member in Lithuania, poet Ona Lukauskaite-Poskine, died in December 1983. The other members have either emigrated, been exiled or imprisoned, or have died of natural causes. One, Father Bronius Laurinavicius, summoned to Vilnius for questioning, was pushed under an oncoming truck in full view of eyewitnesses and killed in 1981.

With the forcible dissolution of both public monitoring groups --the Catholic Committee and the Helsinki Group -- the state has focused on suppressing individual religious and cultural manifestations.

Mrs. Jadvyga Bieliauskiene was arrested on November 29, 1982. During a search of her home, KGB agents confiscated history books, religious literature, personal notes and typewriters. The authorities wanted to disrupt secret religious meetings that Mrs. Bieliauskiene was accused of organizing for youth. Since believers are not allowed to provide religious education for their children, they must do so clandestinely. The arrest of Jadvyga Bieliauskiene demonstrates Soviet sensitivity to the teaching of children, especially when it includes lessons in Lithuanian history and literature, as is often the case with teenagers. When the children of her town recited the spiritual and patriotic verses of renowned Lithuanian poet Bernardas Brazdionis of California at a Christmas play, authorities claimed the play was political. They said Mrs. Bieliauskiene was fostering nationalist attitudes in her pupils and teaching them "false ideas of honor and duty."

Following her arrest, KGB agents went to the school to interrogate Mrs. Bieliauskiene's students. Pupils summoned for questioning were

ordered to "confess" in writing the "crimes" of their teacher. Those who refused to cooperate were threatened with low grades or imprisonment; one was even beaten. Mrs. Bieliaukiene's severe sentence of four years in a strict-regime camp and three years' exile was obviously meant to deter the many others carrying on similar activities.

Lay women and underground nuns are very active in teaching children. Even though all religious orders were disbanded when the Soviets took over, religious life is still flourishing in Lithuania. It was reorganized underground in the 1970s and there are now about 2,400 nuns. All are secularly employed but are involved in unofficial church life in their free time.

Catholics view themselves as victims of discrimination because the state attempts to stifle all manifestations of religion among school-children, pressing them to join the Young Pioneers or the Communist Youth League by threatening them with low grades or exclusion from higher education. This problem has been extensively dealt with in a special section of the Chronicle called "In the Soviet School."

There are a number of deeply committed young Catholics. Some are active dissidents like Julius Sasnauskas, sentenced at age 19 to six and a half years for underground publishing activity. In an open letter to the Central Committee of the Lithuanian SSR, he protested against the distortion of Lithuanian history and the suppression of Lithuanian culture. Robertas Grigas, who was forcibly conscripted into the Soviet army for "reeducation" and courageously refused to take the military oath, proclaiming his loyalty to God and country, was beaten and thrown into a military prison. Nineteen-year-old Romas Zemaitis was sentenced to two years in a general-regime camp for participating in a religious procession. He was disqualified from taking his high-school final examinations, thus blocking any further education. Last year, he and his brothers were accused of raising the tricolor flag of independent Lithuania at school.

CONTROLS ON THE OFFICIAL CHURCH AND THE SEMINARY

The repressive Soviet policy toward the church and its leaders has in no way eased. Bishop Julijonas Steponavicius, illegally exiled for 24 years, remains under strict government surveillance. Neither he nor Bishop Viuncentas Sladkevicius, banished to a remote parish, were deterred from cooperating openly with the religious-rights movement. Not until 1982 were Vatican nominees accepted and one of the bishops, Viuncentas Sladkevicius, reinstated. The appointment of Bishops Sladkevicius and Antanas Vaicius, neither of whom is known to be a compliant servant of the regime, ought to be considered a victory for the church. The senior bishop, Julijonas Steponavicius, who should be archbishop of Vilnius, remains in exile: it is speculated that he is the in pectore cardinal named by Pope John Paul II in 1979.

The commissioner for religious affairs in the Lithuanian SSR ordered Bishop Steponavicius not to attend the closing observance of the Year of St. Casimir last August 26 in the capital city of Vilnius. Pope John Paul II was denied permission by Soviet authorities to travel to the predominantly Roman Catholic republic.

During 1980 and 1981, indirect methods were used to terrorize the clergy: six priests were brutally attacked, three of them dying under suspicious circumstances.

The declining number of clergy in Lithuania is due not to a shortage of vocations but to government control of the sole official seminary in Kaunas. Annual admissions run far below the number of priests who die or retire each year. Although the commissioner for religious affairs, Petras Anilionis, has the final decision on admission of candidates to the seminary and undoubtedly tries to weed out individuals unlikely to cooperate with the state, the seminary has been able to turn out many priests loyal to the church. That is remarkable considering that teaching is poor, that morale is low due to infiltration and the presence of a number of unsuitable candidates, and the rector is a well-known collaborator.

An unofficial seminary was started in 1972 after many suitable candidates were refused entry year after year to the official seminary. By 1980, 15 secretly ordained priests had turned up in parishes, to the intense annoyance of the Council, which has threatened one parish with closure if its "illegal" priest does not leave. One of the known "underground" priests, Vilgilijus Jaugelis, died of cancer at the age of 32, a national hero. He studied to be a priest at the unofficial seminary after being denied admission to the official one for six consecutive years.

LACK OF RELIGIOUS PRESS

The church has been virtually deprived of religious literature. Since the war, it has been allowed to print only limited editions of the New Testament, catechisms, some prayer books and the Catholic Calendar-Directory. Many of those publications were exported to the West for propaganda purposes. In the case of the 1982 Calendar-Directory, churches and clergy were allowed only one copy each. These publications are largely unavailable to the general public. The publication of the missal has been delayed because paper provided by the Vatican was mysteriously damaged and printers have been "too busy" to complete the order.

In 1982, Commissioner Anilionis made Lithuanian Catholics a first-time offer -- a paper of their own. However, it was extended on one condition: that the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania cease publication. The reply of the Chronicle editors was curt: the

only way to stop it was to put an end to the crimes against truth and justice that it records. The editors maintained that the achievements of the Catholic Church in Lithuania over the years were attained "not through diplomacy or docility, but at the price of active struggle and sacrifice...."

THE SOVIET CATHOLIC DIASPORA

Catholicism confronts two chief difficulties in Latvia, where it is the minority denomination, and Cardinal Julijans Vaivods has succeeded in dealing with both.

The first problem is the fact that the Catholic population of Latvia is scattered throughout the country. Church leaders have had to pull together dispersed clusters of the faithful.

The second problem is a shortage of priests. Vaivods has been remarkably successful in preserving the numbers of Catholic churches and believers in Latvia, while avoiding both unprincipled cooperation with the Soviet authorities and outright conflict.

The only Catholic seminary in the USSR, outside of Kaunas, Lithuania, is the seminary in Riga, Latvia. Not all the seminarians here are Latvians. The seminary also supports "the diaspora" of Catholics outside the Baltic area, providing aid to scattered congregations as far away as Kazakhstan. It is Vaivod's concern with ministering to the scattered faithful that seems to have influenced Pope John Paul II's naming of Vaivods in 1983 as the Soviet Union's first resident cardinal.

One such missionary to scattered Catholics was Father Josif Svidnitsky. The 47-year-old cleric was arrested in Novosibirsk in December 1984. From 1959 to 1967, Father Svidnitsky, who is of Polish origin, lived in Riga, where he studied for the priesthood. From 1967 to 1971 he tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain permission to practice as a priest. Having been secretly ordained in 1971, he exercised his ministry in secret for several years, until he encountered problems that led to his exile to Soviet Central Asia in 1976. He had charge there of a community of several thousand Catholics of German origin who had been relocated to this area during the Stalin era. There are at present some 2 million ethnic Germans in the Soviet Union. Most of them are descendants of colonists who settled in Russia during the reign of Catherine the Great.

Again Svidnitsky was forced to move. In 1983 he began working in the Novosibirsk area with a small number of German, Polish and Lithuanian Catholics. There he was arrested and charged with conducting an unauthorized worship service. His recent whereabouts are unknown.

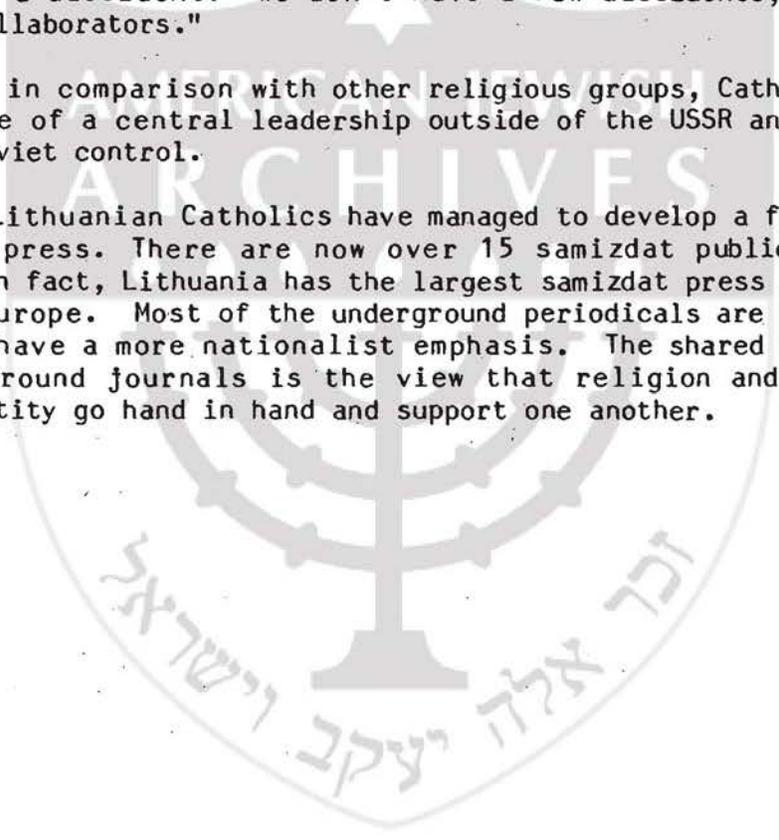
CONCLUSION

The Catholic dissent movement is growing. It is a movement of determined people who believe that both the trends in Soviet domestic affairs and the election of Pope John Paul II support their expectations.

In Lithuania, several factors have contributed to the strength of the religious dissent movement. First, it has always enjoyed a great degree of popular support because it has a natural constituency. Father Svarinskas, one of the imprisoned priests, boldly asserted at a 1978 press conference for Western correspondents in Moscow: "Everyone in Lithuania is a dissident. We don't have a few dissidents; we have a handful of collaborators."

Second, in comparison with other religious groups, Catholics have the advantage of a central leadership outside of the USSR and thus not subject to Soviet control.

Third, Lithuanian Catholics have managed to develop a flourishing underground press. There are now over 15 samizdat publications in Lithuania; in fact, Lithuania has the largest samizdat press per capita in Eastern Europe. Most of the underground periodicals are religious, though some have a more nationalist emphasis. The shared feature of these underground journals is the view that religion and national-cultural identity go hand in hand and support one another.



THE UKRAINIAN SITUATION

Testimony by
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I propose to give you a concise summary of charges against Soviet rule in the Ukraine, and to outline some selected areas of the Ukrainian struggle for cultural and religious rights. I intend to present a plea for the survival of the Ukrainian nation as an ethnic community in the USSR.

First, I would like to report briefly on my personal encounters with the Soviet power in the land of my youth.

I came into contact with Soviet military and political authorities for the first time at the end of World War II when Soviet armies liberated my native region, Carpatho-Ukraine, from Nazi-Hungarian occupation in October 1944. The local population, although Ukrainian by ethnic affiliation and aspiring to be one day united with the rest of the Ukrainian nation, would have preferred to remain outside the Soviet state after the war, preferably as an autonomous region within the future democratic Czechoslovakia, as was the case prior to World War II. The Soviets disregarded the people's wishes. They themselves determined the fate of my native region, without any authentic democratic consultation of the citizens. True, they staged a Congress of People's Committees in the city of Mukachevo on November 26, 1944, and achieved unanimous "approval" of a resolution calling for the incorporation of the land into the USSR, under the patriotic guise of "unification with Mother-Ukraine." I was among those delegates at the Congress who thought to question the propriety of such a resolution and to demand an alternative solution, that is, to conduct a free, popular plebiscite. We were silenced. Under moral and political pressures, the people were asked to sign petitions to the Moscow government for unification, and the Czechoslovak government finally capitulated before Stalin's dictate. Within seven months, the Soviet drive for annexation was accomplished.

In the meantime, however, certain policies were put into practice

that indicated the course of future Sovietization. A decree was issued according to which the majority of the population had a right to take over the churches of the minority. What it actually meant was that the Ukrainian Catholic churches could be taken over by the Orthodox but not vice versa. Thus in my village my religious community was deprived of its church, although the Orthodox majority already had their own church building. Ours was simply closed, and the only alternative for people was to gather in private homes for services. Within four years, the entire religious community in my region, some 350,000, and about 4 million in the entire western Ukraine, was prohibited from practicing their religion. Their church was officially dissolved. This was Soviet version of the religious freedom and the separation of church and state.

Local party leaders needed active young men and, because of my cultural and educational activities, they wanted me to work for the party. I had refused to join the party, and that was the beginning of my serious problems with the Soviet regime. I was accused of being unpatriotic and anti-Soviet. The only way out was to escape to the West, which I did via Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the fall of 1945. Ever since that time I have been on the blacklist of "traitors and enemies of the people."

For the past 40 years, my studies, scholarly work, and academic and journalistic activities have been directed toward Soviet politics, not only in the Ukraine but also in the rest of the USSR and Eastern Europe. Based on this continuous investigation of Soviet affairs, I am prepared to make the following charges against the Soviet rule in the Ukraine:

1. Politically, the country of my descent is oppressed, deprived of basic political freedoms, of any representative government, denied freedom of choice in the most simple areas of life. There is not a trace of democracy, no matter how often the term is repeated by Soviet leaders and media.

This is so despite the fact that the Soviets claim that the Ukrainian people determined their fate 65 years ago by constituting the so-called Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. That republic enjoys a paper constitution with the attributes of national sovereignty and other paraphernalia of statehood, such as national anthem, emblem, flag, and even foreign representation epitomized in the bogus membership of the Ukraine in the United Nations. All this is covered by the fig leaf of Soviet federalism. The Ukraine and other non-Russian republics in the USSR lack any real autonomy; their status is worse than was the status of former Western colonies in Africa and Asia.

Soviet federalism is nothing but a facade. Everything is decided in Moscow, including the appointments of full professors at the Ukrainian universities or granting of doctoral degrees to the candidates from the Ukraine. Soviet-type elections are labeled by political dissenters as a farce.

The Soviets have a double standard when it comes to democracy, elections, and freedom of political associations -- one for the West, and one for their own country. The so-called Third Basket in the Final Act of the Helsinki Agreements of 1975 operates unilaterally, that is, only vis-a-vis Western European countries. The Soviet bloc, and specifically the USSR, has its own interpretation of human rights, exchange of people and ideas, and the right to emigrate.

Politically, the Ukrainian nation in the USSR is enslaved as are all other non-Russian groups. Russians are privileged as a nation, but certainly not as individuals. In the latter capacity, they are deprived of individual and human freedoms in the same ways as are other citizens.

2. Russians, as a nation, are considered the ruling people, the "big brother"; they are the nation-building majority destined to absorb, culturally and linguistically, all other groups. Hence the camouflaged policy of assimilation, the elimination of national cultures and ethnic diversity. In the past, this often took the form of forced measures and of institutional suppression of independent national development. Presently, it is a consciously planned and coordinated policy of demographic resettlement, promoted emigration of Ukrainians to other republics and of Russians and others to the Ukraine. The desired result is a demographic mix in which the Ukrainian element is becoming weaker against the dynamic and, in national terms, ruthless, domineering, self-righteous Russians, who are a sort of superrace among non-Russians.

While in 1926 Russians constituted only 6 percent of the population of the Ukraine, in the last census they constituted 20 percent, mostly as a result of immigration. They live mostly in cities and hold better jobs and more influential positions in the administration, the economy, and the national defense. The indigenous population of the Ukraine is seriously threatened by Russians, who behave as the ruling group.

3. In the Ukrainian Republic, as well as in other non-Russian republics, the government immediately introduces for Russians their schools, broadcasting, theaters, and press. But not for Ukrainians in Russia or in other republics. If a Ukrainian family leaves its homeland, it hardly has an opportunity to cultivate Ukrainian culture, even if dense concentrations of Ukrainians exist in some areas like Kazakhstan, the Far East, the Kuban region or Voronezh oblast.

Since the mid-1930s, all schools offering instruction in Ukrainian outside the Ukrainian Republic were closed. Three hundred thousand Ukrainians in Moscow do not have a single Ukrainian club, a theater, a weekly paper, not even an hour of cultural programming on TV or radio. In the greater Chicago area, in comparison, there are about 40,000 people of Ukrainian origin. They have five Saturday schools of Ukrainian studies, six choirs, two biweeklies, several periodicals, two ethnic banking institutions, a museum, a Ukrainian modern art gallery, 15 churches or prayer houses of different denominations (in which

services are conducted in Ukrainian), 10 radio programs, and over 120 clubs and associations. You are more likely to hear the Ukrainian language on Chicago and Western avenues in the near West Town of Chicago, officially named "Ukrainian Village," than on the streets of the Ukrainian capital, Kiev.

Practically all technological and scientific publications in the Ukraine appear in Russian. That policy was instituted in the late 1970s. On the grounds that Ukrainian universities and institutes are attended by non-Ukrainians, and particularly by students from Third World countries, the instruction in 75-80 percent of classes is given in Russian. The rationalization of this policy goes as follows: non-Ukrainians should not be forced to learn Ukrainian, but Ukrainians and other non-Russians must acquire knowledge of the Russian language as a sort of lingua franca (common tongue), the language of "great" Lenin.

All this amounts to an open and blatant Russification and degradation of Ukrainian culture, literature, cinema, and theater as something good for the peasants but not for a cultured society. All that is Ukrainian is provincial, second- or third-rate culture.

4. There is a conscious, planned, coordinated effort to mold one Soviet nation with common cultural traits out of diverse and different stocks. That is ethnic genocide, the cultural annihilation of the 1,000-year-old Ukrainian civilization, culture, national identity, and language. The ruling party and the state-controlled institutions as well as arrogant chauvinists disguise these efforts under slogans of "mutual enrichment," "rapprochement" and "international friendship." Anything that stresses national identity, ethnic-linguistic particularity and autonomous development of a nation is labeled "bourgeois nationalism," "separatism," reaction," and, naturally, is fostered by Western imperialist interests.

5. In the last 20 years, the Ukraine has resisted this Russification, the Russian political and cultural onslaught. In the 1960s and in the early 1970s, the Ukraine lived through a period of national revival, limited as it was due to the continuing Communist system, but nevertheless a renaissance.

Since 1972, a direct offensive started against this renaissance, against anything that was Ukrainian, separate, and genuinely national. At that time Moscow demoted Ukrainian party secretary Petro Shelest, allegedly for his nationalist leanings.

The Ukrainian dissident movement -- or, better, the national resistance -- has become a powerful instrument in national self-defense and in the awakening of national consciousness. Underground papers, the samizdat, open demonstrations, and loosely organized movements, particularly among students and young intelligentsia, could become potent catalysts of national integration and self-determination. The movement has developed a political program and undertaken steps for reform.

6. Ukrainian dissidents, such as Moroz, Lukianenko, Svitlychny, Karavansky, and a hundred others known to us (and there were thousands of anonymous activists), confronted the regime with a demand to respect their own constitution, their own law (restricted as it is) guaranteeing some individual, cultural, religious, or even political rights. The movement found an echo and a following among larger segments of the population. Some went so far as to pose the question of secession of the Ukrainian Republic from the USSR since, astonishingly, such a right still exists in the Soviet constitution. The group of Ukrainian lawyers who raised that issue was severely prosecuted by the courts: several members of the group were sentenced to long prison terms and a few got the death penalty.

When in 1976 Ukrainian intellectuals founded in Kiev the Ukrainian Helsinki Accords Monitoring Group, the same fate befell them. They were arrested and sentenced to long terms in prisons and labor camps. None of the other monitoring groups in the USSR suffered such losses as the Ukrainian group. Out of three dozen members who dared publicly to acknowledge their membership, more than 20 are still in camps, a few in exile; others have been released after serving their sentences. The best talents, poets, artists, scholars, professionals, in their prime of life, were incapacitated as cultural figures of the contemporary Ukraine.

In the last year and a half, three members of the Ukrainian Helsinki group -- Tykhyi, Marchenko, and Stus -- died in camps because the authorities refused to provide them with adequate medical care; two other political prisoners committed suicide.

7. Also in recent years three Ukrainian Catholic priests were killed by unknown "criminals," a new tactic of the KGB. Two secret Ukrainian Catholic nuns also were murdered.

The fate of the Ukrainian Catholic Church is a special chapter of Soviet repressive policy. It is well known that the church is outlawed. There is nothing in Soviet law that justifies such a measure against Ukrainian Catholics. Along with a few other denominations, and, of course, including the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Catholic Church has been suppressed and liquidated by the government, which, to secure that purpose, staged a pseudosynod in 1946. It was ideologically inconsistent that an atheist regime would favor one religion over another. But, politically, the CPSU strengthened the Russian Orthodox Church at the expense of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, because the latter was a national church and Western-oriented.

Although the entire hierarchy was jailed in 1945-46, and about one third of the clergy along with many thousands of laity were imprisoned and exiled, the church continues to exist as an underground community with its secret hierarchy, priests, and nuns. There is abundant evidence that the church has many adherents and flourishes in martyrdom.

Recently, a Central Committee of Ukrainian Catholics was formed in western Ukraine, along with a Defense Committee of the Rights of the Catholic Church and of the Believers in the Ukraine. Its first head, Yosyf Terelya, a 42-year-old militant, is imprisoned and up to now has served half of his life in Soviet jails, exile, or in psychiatric institutions. So has his successor, Vasyl Kobryn, and so too that vocal spokesman for the rights of Ukrainian Catholics, Rev. Hryhorii Budzinsky.

The martyrology of the Ukrainian Church is an endless story of sufferings, struggle, and perseverance.

The Soviets cannot suppress the religious spirit of the people and impose an alien church on the Ukrainian nation. They are employing thousands of atheists and anti-Catholic agitators, they publish each year millions of copies of their antireligious publications, promote atheistic films, subsidize lectures, museums, etc., but without much result.

Ukrainians are strongly attached to their faith, to the church of their ancestors, and to their culture. The ethnocide of Ukrainians by the Soviet-Russian regime has no precedent in modern history other than perhaps the Jewish holocaust or Armenian massacres. Ukrainians did suffer from the 1920s through the artificial famine in 1932-33, up to the recent decimation of the Ukrainian elite. But the regime wants to annihilate the Ukrainian nation, politically and culturally, though maybe not physically. It is for Communists not a bad thing that Ukrainians live and toil for the greater glory of Communist Russia, but there should not be a Ukrainian political problem, a Ukrainian nation whose striving for independence threatens the very existence of the last colonial empire on the globe.

This is my j'accuse of the Soviet Communist leadership and of all those Russians and non-Russians in the East, as well as in the West, who by their conspiracy of silence promote ethnocidal policy in the USSR.

Western opinion rightly dramatizes and condemns apartheid in South Africa and demands the end of that inhuman system. Very few people apply a similar attitude toward the USSR, which practices discrimination, cultural group annihilation, and the suppression of entire religious communities.

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Testimony by
Irene Barinoff
Lay Member, Russian Orthodox Community
Seattle, Wash.

Today we speak on behalf of 403 known prisoners of conscience,¹ thousands of unknown prisoners, and millions of people who risk imprisonment in order to profess their religious faith in the Soviet Union. We address the plight of Christians -- Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant -- and Jews, but recognize that many other citizens of the USSR also bear this heavy burden.

The largest group of Christians in the Soviet Union belongs to the Orthodox Church. Russian Orthodox Christians have suffered immensely during their 70 years under the Soviet regime. Their situation, in many ways, is much more complex than that of other religious groups.

First, the Orthodox Church is the most visible church. Nearly everyone in the USSR knows a "backward granny" or "old man" who "believes." Thus people who wish to protest visibly but "safely" against the system begin to wear crosses and to attend the Orthodox Church, although they may not actually accept the teachings of the Orthodox faith.

Second, Soviet sociologists, concerned about the 60 percent baptism rate among the country's citizens, have categorized believers into four types: fanatical believers; confirmed believers; traditional believers; and waverers or vacillators.² The fanatical believers are considered to be irrational, devoid of common sense, characterized by frenetic religiosity. Manifestations of these symptoms often provide authorities with justification to have these Soviet citizens committed to psychiatric hospitals for "curative treatment." Confirmed believers, while less zealous in the visible practice of their faith and less divorced from normal participation in society, are also totally immune to the arguments of antireligious propaganda. They work conscientiously and peacefully to carry out their religious convictions as best they can.

Fear of reprisals does not dissuade them from giving children religious instruction and engaging in missionary and charitable work, all of which are against Soviet law. Soviet specialists do not fear the traditional believers, as they participate in religious observances as a matter of custom rather than understanding. The waverers, while not necessarily committed to a particular set of beliefs, actively participate in the struggle on the religious front by helping believers when possible, and opposing the antireligious policies of the government. Soviet sociologists are concerned about this group, as their number continues to grow.

Confined to the Soviet intelligentsia, the religious dissident movements in the USSR have not involved or made an appeal to the general population, in contrast, for example, with the situation in Poland.³ Although the movements initially received much foreign press coverage, they have been effectively neutralized by the authorities because of their almost total isolation. The one exception to this has been the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights in the USSR, founded by Father Gleb Yakunin in 1976.

The official church hierarchy is constantly poised on the fine line between discretion and valor. Some priests and bishops choose to behave with overzealous political loyalty, particularly when abroad, in order to have more opportunity to truly serve the church at home. Others conform entirely to the regime's wishes, while yet others speak the Word of God fearlessly, at first in their parish, then in prison.

This tremendous breadth of religious commitment and experience is gathered under one Orthodox Church. There is no one way to deal with these people as with the Baptists, who are divided into a registered and unregistered church. People who join the registered church know that they will comply to a greater degree with the decrees of the Council for Religious Affairs;⁴ members of the unregistered church have made a voluntary commitment to lead a life of martyrdom. The complex mixture of adherents' personal commitments within the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as the stranglehold that the government has on the Moscow patriarchate, diffuses any semiorganized attempts to lessen the difficult conditions for believers, but sometimes allows spontaneous successes to occur as well.

My first story is about Father Gleb Yakunin, the founder of the Christian Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights in the USSR.

Father Yakunin was born in Moscow in 1934 and was ordained a priest in 1962. On December 15, 1965, together with Father Nikolai Eshliman, he sent an open letter⁵ protesting the illegal actions of the leaders and representatives of the Council for Russian Orthodox Church Affairs (CROCA) to Patriarch Aleksei of Moscow; copies of the letter were sent to all bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. A simultaneous declaration was addressed to N. Podgorny, chairman of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. In both letters the authors spoke in detail

about the repressions to which the church was being subjected. In the letter to the patriarch the authors called upon the episcopate to defend the church in the spirit of early Christian confession.

In the declaration addressed to Podgorny, they called upon the government to cease its pressure on the Church and to adhere to Soviet law. The latter separates Church and State and does not permit interference in the internal affairs of the Church. Under pressure from Soviet organs the Moscow Patriarchate in absentia, without any explanation or even discussion, forbade both priests to serve....After suspension, Father Yakunin and his family were left with no means of supporting themselves, for in the USSR a priest is not allowed to work in a civil capacity. During these years Father Yakunin worked at many low-paying Church jobs, but under KGB pressure he was fired even from these duties as he did not cease his writing activities.⁶

In 1976, Father Yakunin founded the Christian Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights. On November 1, 1979, he was arrested for anti-Soviet agitation and sentenced to five years in a strict-regime camp. So greatly respected was he that Protestant, Jewish, and Russian Orthodox believers, among others, gathered outside his courtroom as a sign of moral support. At his sentencing, Father Gleb said, "I rejoice that the Lord has sent me this test. As a Christian, I accept it gladly." In May 1982, he went on an 80-day hunger strike before his Bible, which had been confiscated, was returned to him. He was sentenced to four months in the camp prison for "improper behavior and conducting religious propaganda among young people."⁷

Why does the Soviet government allow the church to exist? The church can fulfill three functions for the government:

First, the Church can convince...[the West]...that there is religious freedom in the Soviet Union, thus bringing in more tourist money and improving the international image of the Soviet government. This would be accomplished by retaining in cities frequented by foreign tourists a minimum necessary number of churches, functioning as oriental, mystical 'theaters' of sorts, with the utmost splendor in rites and ceremonies, beautiful vestments, impressive choirs, and so on.

Secondly, the Church can satisfy the religious thirsts of the old semi-literate masses. Services performed in Church Slavonic, a language incomprehensible to the average Soviet Russian, and sermons with no real relevance to daily life, a place for a few intellectual snobs to frequent as a way of demonstrating alienation from official values in a safe form -- this deadly approach to religion is preferable to a dynamic priesthood, preaching the Word of God in the local language in a living and active parish.

The third and most positive purpose of the Church from the point of view of the Soviet government is the political propaganda activities in the World Council of Churches, at various peace conferences, mainly abroad, in promoting Soviet foreign policy interests. In these forums the churchmen are to refer to God, Church and theology as rarely and as abstractly as possible. They are to condemn the noncommunist West, appeal to international agencies to support "local wars of liberation" and promote the so-called theology of liberation.⁸

The Soviet government has to pay a price for the foreign-policy contribution of the church leaders -- toleration of an internal role and function of the church that often goes far beyond the limits set for her by the state. The church in the USSR is a genuine, living and vibrant church. She lives and gains spiritual victories in spite of her chained hierarchs and because of her living saints among the laity and priests.

Keston College, the prestigious research institute for the study of religion in Communist lands, reports that although many hundreds of religious believers are arrested each year, only a small number are prosecuted.⁹ Most are just investigated and dealt with "administratively" -- fined, sent to detention for 10-15 days -- or are handled "roughly" by the police, discriminated against in housing, employment or education, and relieved of all personal religious literature.

Prisoners are sentenced under the Soviet criminal code for purely religious activities (articles 142, 227) -- teaching and missionary work; for actions arising out of religious belief (articles 80, 198-1, 249, 60, 70, 190-1, 162, 188-3, 190-3, 191, 191-1, 206, 209) -- protesting violations of human rights; for parasitism or for "prohibited trading" -- unofficial printing of religious materials.

The most severe sentence is prison, followed by special strict-, intensified- or ordinary-regime labor camp; exile; forced or corrective labor in penal settlements.¹⁰ Under article 188-3, introduced on October 1, 1983, additional periods of imprisonment can be imposed for "malicious disobedience to the requirements of the administration of a corrective labor institution" solely on the evidence of camp officials.

In prison, lack of exercise, nourishment, and hygiene lead to rapid deterioration in health. For 23 hours a day prisoners are kept in cement-floored cells where iron blinds cut off the daylight and lights burn day and night. Most cells are damp, inefficiently heated, with poor or no ventilation. Some have a toilet and a sink, some just a bucket. The prisoners are fed through a trough in the cell door. For 30 or 60 minutes a day the prisoners are allowed to exercise in a small yard. All new arrivals are placed on strict regime, 1200 calories or less a day of often rotten food lacking in vitamins and fats, and can be returned there as punishment for violations of regulations. The poor

diet often leads to swelling joints, stomach ulcers, and aggravation of existing illnesses.

My second story is about Irina Ratushinskaya.

A young poetess from Kiev, Irina Ratushinskaya was only 28 years old when she was arrested in 1982 because of her poems and thrown into a hard-labor camp in the Mordovian swamps. If she is lucky enough to survive to the end of her sentence, she will be 40 when she returns to her husband. It would be hard to single out one prisoner as the most courageous, but one of the most must be she. Her love and support for her fellow prisoners have won their admiration as the following appeal from them indicates. Among the signatories are a Roman Catholic, a Pentecostal, a Baptist, and an Orthodox Christian.

We, women political prisoners, want to tell of our friend Irina Ratushinskaya. Her fate deserves the special attention of the public worldwide, her fate depends on that attention.

Irina Ratushinskaya is the youngest of the prisoners of the Mordovian women's concentration camp. She is the first woman to receive the maximum sentence under part one of Article 70 (anti-Soviet agitation) -- seven years' camp and five years' exile.

Irina is a talented poetess, whose poems passed around the country like a breath of freedom, a person with a lively and precise mind, a courageous and effective campaigner for human rights.... Even in camp she is persecuted -- by deprivation of the right to make purchases in the shop, of visits, by incarceration in the terrible conditions of the isolation cells -- all for her refusal to wear [her badge]...for not giving up her struggle for the rights, dignity, and freedom of man, for being an example to others in this struggle....

A healthy woman when she came into prison, Irina has been sick for many months now. She has pains in the kidneys, swellings and a constant debilitating temperature. Despite her poor health, she has more than once gone on strike and hunger strike in defense of others, which has brought new repressions for her. But they did not succeed in breaking her. She kept her joyful outlook and her willingness to give help at any minute.

For example, in December, when she had just come out of the isolation cell and although she was sick herself, Irina immediately went on strike in defence of Nayalya Lazareva who had been placed in the isolation cell despite being ill. Despite her hunger-strike, despite her temperature, they threw Irina back into the isolation cell. In this icy concrete box

she saw in the New Year. On New Year's Eve she looked after Natalya who was completely exhausted and she recited poetry to the criminal prisoners in the adjacent cells....¹¹

NOTES

1. Keston College, Christian Prisoners in the USSR (Keston Book No. 11, 1985), p. 1, and subsequent updates through Keston News Service.
2. D. Konstantinow, Stations of the Cross: The Russian Orthodox Church 1970-1980 (London, Ontario: Zaria Publishing, 1984), pp. 72-82.
3. Ibid., pp. 161-166.
4. William C. Fletcher, in Soviet Believers (Lawrence, Kans.: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1981), p. 221, states that the "Council for Religious Affairs was formed in 1966 by a merger of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults and the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church...[and] has branch offices throughout the country." The council issues registration to churches and keeps records concerning them (p. 23).
5. The main points of this open letter are reprinted in Michael Bourdeaux, Patriarch and Prophets (London: Mowbrays, 1970), pp. 189-194).
6. Michael Meerson-Aksenov and Boris Shragin (eds.), The Political, Social and Religious Thought of Russian "SAMIZDAT" -- An Anthology (Belmont: Nordland, 1977), p. 603.
7. The Samizdat Bulletin, no. 143, March 1985.
8. Dimitry Pospelovsky, The Russian Church Under the Soviet Regime 1917-1982 (Crestwood, N.Y.: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984), pp. 469-471.
9. Christian Prisoners, pp. 3-6.
10. Ibid., pp. 8-13.
11. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

EVANGELICALS IN SOVIET SOCIETY

Testimony by
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The purpose of my testimony today is to discuss the plight of Protestants in the Soviet Union. I will deal mainly with Russian evangelicals, primarily Baptists and Pentecostals, but non-Russian Protestants in the USSR will also be considered.

There is much confusion in the West today regarding the true state of affairs in the Soviet Union relative to believers. The Soviets, of course, continue to insist that there is religious liberty in the Soviet Union. Official Soviet Baptist and Pentecostal leaders repeat this position and, sadly, Western church leaders all too often parrot these views. Other reports, however, indicate that there is considerable persecution. Where does the truth lie?

I will first address the issue of what the Soviet position is relative to the general question of human rights. A brief historical survey of Protestantism during the Soviet rule, comparing the situation of the Russian Orthodox with that of the Protestants, will be presented. The distinction between "registered" and "nonregistered" believers will be clarified. Following a consideration of the frequent failure of Western church leaders to advocate effectively the cause of their fellow believers within the Soviet Union, discussion will turn to an analysis of the most recent data on persecution in the Soviet Union.

Have the Soviets, in fact, ever committed themselves to religious liberty as understood by most human-rights advocates in democratic states? Some Western analysts have quite correctly pointed out that the Soviet understanding of "human rights" is not precisely the same as ours in the West. We tend to think of individual freedoms -- freedom of speech, assembly, religion, etc. -- as the content of human rights. The Soviets, on the other hand, tend to associate human rights with the right to a job, education, and health care. Though this distinction is

certainly important to keep in mind, the Soviets have repeatedly committed themselves on paper to the Western understanding of human rights as the guarantee of individual freedoms. The following passages on religious freedom are from two of the most prominent international agreements to which the Soviets have pledged their support.

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.¹

The participating States will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion . . . participating States will recognize and respect the freedom of the individual to profess and practice, alone or in community with others, religion or belief acting in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience.²

Article 52 of the most recent Soviet constitution (1977) provides for the right to "conduct religious worship or atheistic propaganda." The revealing feature of this article is that there is a guarantee only for antireligious propaganda; there is no provision for religion to present its case to the public.

Furthermore, the right to "conduct religious worship" is severely limited by other Soviet legal statutes. Since 1929, there has existed the Law on Religious Associations. Although revised in 1932, 1962, and 1975, it has remained, since its inception, a primary means of significantly limiting religious freedom in the USSR.

Against the background of constant Soviet insistence that they have been and are now tolerant of religion, we find grim statistics that testify to a very different state of affairs. On the eve of World War I there were 54,105 Russian Orthodox churches. Today there are 7,500. In 1914 there were 1,025 monasteries and convents. Today there are between 16 and 20. There were 61 theological seminaries and church academies. Today there are five.³

The Soviets would have us believe that this decline in the Orthodox Church is the natural, inevitable result of the inexorable march of progressive social history. Lenin accepted Marx's notion that religion was simply the "opiate" of the people -- something destined to disappear when private exploitation and social misery ended. But Soviet authorities have rarely been willing to sit back and let history take its course, let alone allow religion to compete with atheism in the intellectual arena. Scientific Soviet Marxism has been far too aggressive and frightened to allow such open debate.

Between 1917 and 1928, 28 bishops and 1,200 priests of the Russian Orthodox Church were killed.⁴ The most protracted period of severe persecution, however, was undoubtedly from 1929 to 1941, during the first part of the Stalin era. The forties and fifties provided somewhat of a respite for believers in the Soviet Union, at least in comparison with the previous period. The last five years of the Khrushchev era, 1959-64, brought a renewal of widespread persecution to Christians in the USSR. The Brezhnev period was in some ways less openly antagonistic to the Russian Orthodox Church, although the heavy hand of the authorities was quick to descend if priests began to attract too much interest to the faith or challenged the subservience of the church hierarchy to the Communist rules. Dmitrii Dudko, Alexander Ogorodnikov, Lev Regelson, and Gleb Yakunin are just a few who have suffered internment in recent years and months.

Now let us turn our attention to the Protestants. There has been a tendency for Protestants in the Soviet Union to have more conflicts with the authorities and feel more confined than the Russian Orthodox. This phenomenon can partly be explained by the fact that the Russian Orthodox faith is highly liturgical, and thus the constitutional provision for "religious worship" is not without some significance. The Russian Protestant understanding of faith, on the other hand, is far less likely to be satisfied with limiting the expression of one's beliefs to the four walls of a church building. They frequently take very seriously Christ's admonition to spread the faith. It is at this point that the Soviet laws on religious groups conflict sharply with what many Protestants consider to be the proper exercise of their faith.

To understand adequately what it means to be a believer in the Soviet Union, it is necessary to emphasize the distinction between "registered" and "nonregistered" (or underground) believers. The registered churches (Russian Orthodox, Baptist, Pentecostal, etc.) understand and must be willing to abide by the constitutional restraints on the practice of their faith. They also agree to a whole list of other restrictions and requirements as well: no Sunday school for children, certain scriptural texts will not be preached, religious leaders must be approved by the state, members will serve in the military, etc. If a Christian belongs to a registered church and abides by these limitations, the authorities will likely leave him alone. There will be some disadvantages, however. Since the Soviets know who the registered church attendees are, it will mean that promotions at work and access to the top educational institutions will almost certainly be denied to them and their children. But this is a price that many are willing to pay. These people are, in the words of Pope John Paul II, essentially "second-class" citizens. But it should be noted that often Soviet authorities refuse to register groups of believers who are willing to comply with the restrictive laws governing religious groups.

The lot of the unregistered churches is a more difficult one. These churches are composed of members who feel that it is a violation of

their religious convictions to accept government restrictions that impede their opportunities to carry out God's command to evangelize and to involve fully their children in religious worship and training. Therefore, they are constrained to meet secretly. There are many thousands of believers in this category in the Soviet Union -- mainly Baptist and Pentecostal. The Soviets more actively harass these believers. If these Christians are fortunate, perhaps the authorities will simply fine the host of a meeting and the preacher. But when the screws of persecution are turned more tightly, the suffering can increase dramatically. Imprisonment, psychiatric hospitals, abduction of children, even death can be the fate of believers in this category. The "Siberian Seven" and their families were unusually stubborn members of the "underground" church. They were not in trouble because of any particular Pentecostal article of faith, but rather simply because their first loyalty was to God, not to the state.

It is useful to consider in more detail the history of the Protestant church in Soviet society. Many are surprised to learn that initially evangelicals in Russia prospered as a result of the Communist takeover, whereas they had been a persecuted minority under the tsars.⁵ The Bolsheviks were certainly no friends of religious belief. They did feel, however, that if the evangelicals prospered they would do so at the expense of the Orthodox Church, and it was the latter they feared as the greater threat. Walter Sawatsky, an authority on Protestants in the Soviet Union, characterizes the period 1917-29 as a "golden age" for Russian evangelicals.

By the end of the 1920s, however, Stalin had managed to consolidate his power and was beginning to tighten the screws. Some historians describe this period as a "second revolution" that brought to the Soviet Union the frightening new phenomenon of totalitarianism. The crucial turning point for believers was the promulgation in 1929 of the Law on Religious Cults, which severely restricted the practice of religious faith. Participation of youth in religious activities was greatly limited. All church activities had to be registered with the state, and churches were not allowed to provide any welfare assistance (the state, after all, took care of all such matters). Violations of these and other restrictions were used as pretexts by the authorities to close almost all churches and to arrest many of the ministers. Tens of thousands of evangelicals disappeared into the depths of the Gulag prison camps, along with millions of their countrymen.

World War II brought significant changes to both the Russian Orthodox Church and the evangelicals. The patriotism of Russian Christians during the war was something Stalin wished both to exploit and reward. Thenceforth, the Soviets were willing to allow at least a measure of religious freedom, provided it could be carefully controlled. The method of control decided upon was to require the registration of all churches. Congregations were allowed to register if they would agree to limit their activities as dictated by the state. It was also deemed

to be within the state's interests to try to control evangelicals through a church union. Thus, at state insistence, the historic unity congress of 1944 was held, and the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB) was created. The Pentecostals joined the AUCECB the next year. The latter, however, were forced into the Council at the price of severely restricting the practice that most distinguished them from other denominations, namely, speaking in tongues. Mennonites who later became associated with the AUCECB were brought in under similar circumstances; in their case it was pacifism that had to be dropped. Thus Baptist theology has been dominant in the Council from 1944 until the present.

In the years immediately following World War II, the registered churches were left in relative peace. The unregistered churches, however, were frequently harassed by local officials. Ministers of such churches were often given prison sentences of 25 years for "anti-Soviet" activities.

The increased persecution of the early 1960s not only challenged the courage and resourcefulness of Russian Christians, but it also demonstrated how Christian leaders in the West responded to events in the Soviet Union. A major split in the AUCECB was occasioned by the willingness of Council officials to send a letter to all ministers in 1960 instructing them to obey new restrictions (established by the state) on their religious activities. These 1960 regulations were more severe than the 1929 religious law had been.

A significant group within the AUCECB called the Initiativniki (Initiators), later referred to as the Reform Baptists, charged the AUCECB leadership with compromising with the Soviets and acting as accomplices in the crackdown on churchmen. A serious credibility gap formed between the leadership and the constituency of the Council.

It is ironic (and highly revealing) that in the early 1960s, at the height of this antireligious campaign, the number of trips abroad by leading AUCECB officials was increasing, not decreasing. The AUCECB formally joined the World Council of Churches in 1962. The Russian Orthodox Church had joined the year before. These officials assured Western Christian leaders that there was freedom of religion in the Soviet Union, and sought to stifle any rumors about a split in the AUCECB back home. Information from the Reform Baptists, however, was smuggled out to the West at the same time and painted a very different picture of what was happening. These materials from the underground church, documenting severe persecution, became part of the samizdat (self-publishing) literature available in the West. Clearly the official Soviet church spokesmen abroad during this period deliberately hid much of what was going on at home from their Western contacts. Does this mean that they were nothing more than government representatives parroting Communist party directives? In fact, the situation is more complicated than it first appears.

Any objective observer of the contacts between Soviet churchmen and the Western Christian world is well aware that a position can never be taken by Soviet churchmen that does not fully support the foreign policy of the USSR.

Official church spokesmen are forced to compromise and make concessions in order to assure at least some freedom for their registered congregations. The actions of the AUCECB leadership in the early 1960s were particularly questionable and involved considerable cowardice, but the leadership has been forced by its constituency in the Soviet Union to represent it better in recent years. It is improbable that the major Council officials are KGB agents, though the presence of agents is to be found at very high levels of the church. It is important to remember that the official leaders of all Soviet churches must work in a hostile environment, and we must therefore interpret everything they do and say abroad in light of this fact. This is, however, what Western churchmen have often failed to do in the past.

If the conduct of official Christian Soviet spokesmen makes more sense after a careful study of their unique circumstances, the conduct of Christian leaders in the West often simply reflects naivete and ignorance. There are some indications that the World Council of Churches became more sensitive, beginning with the 1975 WCC Assembly in Nairobi. At this Assembly, a letter from Lev Regelson and Father Gleb Yakunin to General Secretary Philip Potter was printed in the Assembly's daily newspaper. These Russian Orthodox dissidents chastised the WCC for ignoring the problem of religious persecution in the Soviet Union. Although the Assembly took no major action, it was at least becoming more aware of the problem. Also in 1975, a letter from the WCC was sent to the Soviet prosecutor in the Georgi Vins case, expressing concern that he was in trouble due to his religious convictions and requesting permission to send a legal observer to the trial. Considering that Vins was the leader of the Reform Baptists -- a group not represented in the WCC -- this was an important departure from the WCC's usual silence. Unfortunately, recent WCC sessions have been most disappointing with respect to considering problems of persecution of Christians in Communist countries.

A pressing problem faced by Soviet evangelicals is the shortage of Bibles. One of the major goals of the missions in the West is smuggling Bibles into the Soviet Union. Despite minor concessions by Soviet authorities, from time to time to allow some Bibles into the country, the severe shortage of Bibles is a constant complaint of Soviet believers. Other religious materials -- commentaries, concordances, etc. -- are almost nonexistent.

Though this testimony has focused on Russian evangelicals, it must be noted that Russians constitute a bit less than 50 percent of the total population of the Soviet Union. There are many evangelicals in the Soviet Union who are not Russian. A good example is provided by the Ukrainian Baptists. Of the 545,000 officially registered Baptists in

the USSR, half live in the Ukraine,⁶ and many of them are Ukrainian. There are many Pentecostals as well in the Ukraine. Conditions for believers in the Ukraine are subject to the same sorts of constraints as those in other parts of the USSR.

In assessments of religion in the Soviet Union, the Baltic republics are frequently not discussed. This is unfortunate, since religion is still a vital component of life in that region. The Baltic republics -- Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania -- were independent countries between World War I and World War II. They were forcibly absorbed into the Soviet empire during World War II. As in Poland, local devotion to the church reflects not only devotion to God but opposition to the Russian empire.

The Lutheran Church is very strong in the Baltic areas.⁷ Though the numbers are much less than before the Soviet takeover, in the early 1980s there were 350,000 Lutherans in Latvia, 250,000 in Estonia, and 20,000 in Lithuania, which is primarily Catholic. As in other areas of the Soviet Union, Baltic Protestant religious activity is primarily restricted to what goes on inside church buildings. The leaders of the Lutheran Protestants have reluctantly given in to accommodation to the political authorities.

Baptists and Pentecostals are also to be found in the Baltic republics. There has been considerable Baptist activity in recent years in Estonia, and in Latvia there are 60 Baptist churches. There are both registered and unregistered Baltic Baptists, some of whom have served time in Siberia, like their Russian and Ukrainian brethren. As in the Russian republic, there is no Baptist seminary. It is necessary to gain what meager credentials are possible via correspondence courses set up by the Moscow Baptists. The Baltic Baptists belong to the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists.

A particularly sore point in relations between the Soviet authorities and the Protestants has been the question of emigration to the West. Except for celebrated cases such as the "Siberian Seven" (Pentecostals who spent almost five years in de facto asylum in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow before being allowed to emigrate in mid-1983), Russian Protestants almost never are granted permission to emigrate. There has been nothing for Russian Christians comparable to Jewish emigration, which at its peak in 1979 saw over 51,000 Jews depart. The Jewish figure dropped to just over 1300 emigres in 1983, but even this dwarfs the modest number of Russian Protestants who have been given exit permits.⁸

Estimates range from 30,000 to 50,000 Pentecostals who have actually made known their desire to emigrate. Considering the obvious fact that they will probably be turned down, and the likelihood that they will suffer discrimination for even making known their desire to leave, the statistics speak volumes regarding what it is like to be a believer in Soviet society.

If emigration were more favorably viewed by the authorities, the numbers requesting emigration would undoubtedly rise sharply. There is no reason to believe emigration policy will change anytime in the near future. Of course, what Russian Protestants most want is simply more freedom to practice their religion in the places where they now live.

Our ability to monitor and assess the treatment of believers in the Soviet Union is greatly facilitated by the fine work of Keston College (Heathfield Road, Keston, Kent, England, BR26BA). Michael Bourdeaux, who founded this research center, has also written a number of useful books on the topic. Keston College publishes the periodical Religion in Communist Lands, and the biweekly newsletter Keston News Service. Another good source of information in English is the journal Religion in Communist Dominated Areas (475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10027).

How has the treatment of Christians in the 1980s compared with that of earlier periods? There is general agreement that the last five years have seen greater pressure on believers than was usually the case in the several preceding years. There are a number of ways in which the increased repression can be measured. Keston College reports that as of mid-September 1984 it could document 336 known Christian prisoners. This is more than twice the number for 1977. The number approached 400 in 1982. Most of these prisoners have been Baptists.⁹

Another way to gauge the status of believers in Soviet society is to examine changes in the criminal code and observe how they are applied in cases involving Christians. One of the most painful forms of persecution that the Soviets are making use of more and more is the practice of resentencing. This often happens a few days before a prisoner is scheduled to complete a labor camp sentence. The legal statute that is often employed to accomplish this new sentence of up to three years is a new article in the RSFSR criminal code, 188-3, which allows resentencing for "malicious disobedience" to labor-camp authorities. Of course, once the authorities decide to employ the statute, almost anything can be considered "malicious disobedience." In late 1984 there were 47 Baptists serving repeated sentences, according to Georgi Vins, the former head of the underground Baptists who is now living in the West.¹⁰

Four major Baptist leaders were subjected to this practice of resentencing in 1983. One of them, Nikolai Baturin, is the leader of the unregistered Baptists. With a year left on his present sentence, three more years were tacked on. Since 1948, Baturin has already spent 18 years in labor camps as punishment for his religious activities.

Prisoners who have been convicted of "especially dangerous state crimes" can be resentenced for up to five years. Unfortunately, article 70 of the criminal code falls into this category. Since this charge has to do with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," and since the Soviets often interpret religious activities as being essentially "anti-Soviet," believers may have committed "especially dangerous" crimes in the eyes

of the state. This means that the 1980s have seen the Soviet regime take actions that make it even easier to keep believers in labor camps indefinitely.

Another new statute that is being used against believers is article 198-2 of the RSFSR criminal code which deals with "malicious infringement of the rules of administrative surveillance." The surveillance has to do with the probationary period of former prisoners after release from the camps. The Russian Orthodox believer Valeri Senderov was sentenced under this in 1983 to the maximum seven years imprisonment and five years of exile. He was charged with "slandering the Soviet state and social system" by producing evidence that documented discrimination against Jews by the mathematics faculty of Moscow State University. This new statute, making it easier to arrest former prisoners, can be applied to believers of any denomination.

Other activities in the most recent period that have resulted in prison sentences include: setting up a summer camp for children of Baptist prisoners, evangelizing, and distributing samizdat materials, that is, materials not published by the state.

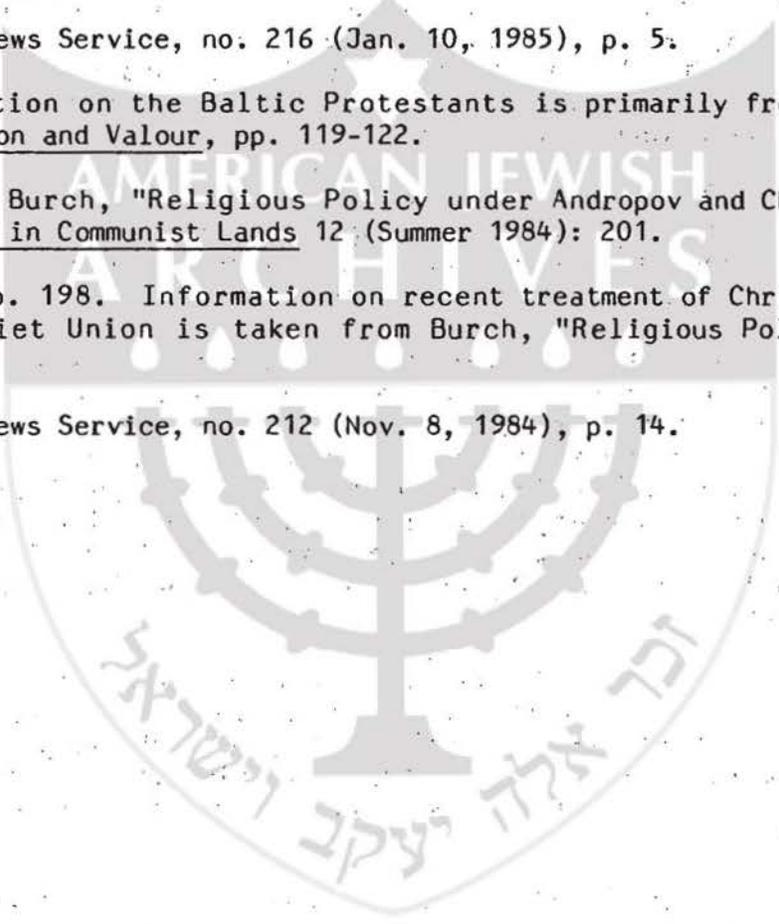
It is unlikely that the Gorbachev regime will significantly alter the present policy of repression, though it should be fully expected that the public posturing regarding the alleged existence of religious freedom will become more sophisticated. Given the history of gullibility of Western religious leaders and some politicians, and the presence now of a younger, more attractive, more clever Kremlin chief, we can expect the next months and years to be difficult for those committed to the task of improving conditions for believers in the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, this is a moment of opportunity. With strong, sober, and firm involvement of human rights activists, religious leaders, and government officials, we should challenge the new Soviet leadership to ease the lot of those who wish to practice the freedoms that their own government has repeatedly guaranteed in international agreements.

The Helsinki accords on human rights may have been signed in 1975, but ten years later they are far from being implemented in the Soviet Union. There is much work yet to be done. Let us dedicate ourselves to the task of doing it.

NOTES

1. Article 18, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," approved by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948.
2. Principle VII of the "Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations Between Participating States," Final Act of the Conference on

- Security and Co-operation in Europe, Helsinki, August 1, 1975.
3. Trevor Beeson, Discretion and Valour, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), p. 58.
 4. Ibid., p. 37.
 5. Information on the history of Soviet evangelicals, unless otherwise indicated, is taken from Walter Sawatsky, Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1981).
 6. Keston News Service, no. 216 (Jan. 10, 1985), p. 5.
 7. Information on the Baltic Protestants is primarily from Beeson, Discretion and Valour, pp. 119-122.
 8. Carolyn Burch, "Religious Policy under Andropov and Chernenko," Religion in Communist Lands 12 (Summer 1984): 201.
 9. Ibid., p. 198. Information on recent treatment of Christians in the Soviet Union is taken from Burch, "Religious Policy," pp. 198-201.
 10. Keston News Service, no. 212 (Nov. 8, 1984), p. 14.
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PERSECUTED EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN BAPTISTS

Testimony by
Natalia Vins

International Representative for the
Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches
of the Soviet Union, Inc.

Pastor Dmitri Minyakov, 64, is serving his tenth year of imprisonment in a strict-regime concentration camp. He is critically ill with tuberculosis, asthma, and various stomach and heart ailments. Minyakov is emaciated, and at 5 feet 10 inches now weighs only 116 pounds.

Previously Minyakov was imprisoned near Magadan (Kolyma), where he suffered a heart attack and severe asthma attacks. Under Siberian camp conditions, his health deteriorated.

Soviet law provides for the immediate release and return home of critically ill prisoners (article 100 of the RSFSR criminal code states that persons suffering from grave illness may be released by a court). Unfortunately, this law is rarely observed, and it was never applied to Pastor Minyakov.

Dmitri Minyakov is scheduled for release in January 1986. Recently, reports came from his family that a new case is being prepared against him and that authorities intend to resentence him. His case reflects official attempts by government authorities to eliminate faith in God in the Soviet Union.

Religious freedom has not existed in the Soviet Union since atheists came to power in 1917. One of the first assignments of state atheism was the eradication of religion. In their attempt to destroy faith in God, Soviet authorities use all accessible means of persecution. Here is only a partial list of the methods employed by the atheists in their fierce battle against Christians: arrests and trials; prison beatings; house raids and searches; confiscation of Bibles, New Testaments, tape recorders, cassette recordings of sermons and music; children taken from Christian parents; disruption of worship services by

children taken from Christian parents; disruption of worship services by the police and KGB; slander campaigns against Christians in magazines, newspapers, on TV and radio; and internment in psychiatric hospitals.

The 1929 Legislation Regarding Religious Cults reflected the official attitude toward religion while Stalin was in power. The same laws remain in effect today. In addition, many secret mandates, instructions and decrees are used by authorities in their warfare against God.

Since the 1929 legislation went into effect, tens of thousands of Christians have been arrested and tortured in Soviet prisons and labor camps. Between 1929 and 1940, more than 25,000 Evangelical Christian Baptist ministers were arrested; 22,000 of them died as prisoners. During the same years, almost all church buildings and temples were closed or destroyed.

Although the intensity of persecution has fluctuated over the years, it has never ceased. Persecution of Evangelical Christian Baptists was intensified in the early 1960s and continues to the present. Today more than 170 Baptists are incarcerated for actively practicing their faith.

LIFE IMPRISONMENT

One of the most recent methods used on some of the Christian prisoners is denying them their release. They are forced to serve a lifetime sentence. In such cases, although a prisoner's term is completed, he is resented to additional years of imprisonment.

In 1983, a mandate was passed as an appendix to RSFSR criminal code statute 188-3 giving the director of a labor camp the authority to add as much as five years to the sentence of a prisoner who has broken a camp rule or has not "reformed" by the end of his term.

The following "offenses" constitute sufficient cause for resentencing a Christian prisoner: praying, talking with other prisoners about God, possessing a gospel or Scripture portion, writing Bible verses and poems in a notebook or on a sheet of paper, and referring to God in personal letters to family members. By atheistic standards, a Christian has only adequately "reformed" if he rejects God and denies his religious convictions.

In the past two years, nine Evangelical Baptist ministers experienced such resentencing: Nikolai Baturin, 58, now in his twenty-third year of imprisonment, was resented in 1984 to two more years; Yakov Skorniyakov, 57, now in his twelfth year of imprisonment, was resented in 1983 to three more years; Rudolph Klassen, 54, now in his ninth year of imprisonment, was resented in 1983 to three more years; Aleksei Kozorezov, 52, was imprisoned for 12 1/2 years, resented in 1983 to

one and a half years (released June 1985); Aleksei Kalyashin, 30, now in his fifth year of imprisonment, was resentenced in 1984 to two and a half years; Nikolai Boiko, 63, now in his sixteenth year of imprisonment, was resentenced in 1985 to two and a half years; Ivan Shidych, 49, now in his seventh year, resentenced in 1985 to two and a half years; Mikhail Khorev, 54, now in his eleventh year of imprisonment, was resentenced in 1985 to two more years; Pyotr Rumachik, 54, now in his sixteenth year of imprisonment, was not released on August 15, 1985, but transferred from labor camp to prison for resentencing.

The following prisoners, now approaching their release dates, have been notified that new cases are being prepared against them: Dmitri Minyakov, 64, now serving his tenth year of imprisonment; Ivan Antonov, 66, now serving his twentieth year of imprisonment; Fyodor Makhovitsky, 55, now serving his eighth year of imprisonment.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS

Teaching religion to children, holding prayer meetings, organizing a youth choir, and participating in worship services were the charges against Arkady Ivanov, 52, when -- at his trial on June 21, 1983 -- he was declared dangerous to society and sentenced to treatment in a psychiatric prison.

State atheism is a God-fighting system, dedicated to the destruction of any remembrance of God. Ominous dangers are foreshadowed by the Soviet abuse of psychiatry. Atheism considers faith in God abnormal. Simply acknowledging the existence of God is considered evidence of mental disturbance. Innocent people have been diagnosed as "sluggish schizophrenics," committed indefinitely, and subjected to forced drug treatments.

Other Evangelical Baptist prisoners in psychiatric hospitals include: Anna Chertkova, 57, since 1973; Anatoly Runov, 46, since 1979; Vladimir Khailo, 52, since 1980; Vyacheslav Minkov, 21, since 1984; Viktor Bezzubenko, since 1984.

COUNCIL OF PRISONERS' RELATIVES

In 1964, the Council of Prisoners' Relatives (CPR) was organized by wives and mothers of imprisoned Baptist leaders. The CPR serves as an information network throughout the 2000 independent Evangelical Baptist churches across the country, coordinates the distribution of material aid for prisoners' families, and organizes petitions and telegrams in defense of the prisoners.

Soviet authorities, anxious to destroy the church, have finally resorted to arresting prisoners' wives. Ulyana Germaniuk, wife of prisoner Stepan Germaniuk, was arrested July 23, 1985. Serfima

Yudintseva, wife of a pastor and mother of Baptist prisoner, Andrei Yudintsev, was sentenced on March 1, 1985, to two years imprisonment, effective March 1, 1987 (her youngest children are two and six). Criminal proceedings were started against Valentina Firsova not long after her husband's release. Lubov Kostiuhenko, wife of prisoner Grigory Kostiuhenko, and Vera Khoreva, wife of prisoner Mikhail Khorev, were recently interrogated and threatened with arrest.

Just weeks after the release of her husband, Aleksandra Kozorezova, 49, mother of ten children, was forced underground as KGB agents sought to arrest and imprison her. For five years Mrs. Kozorezova awaited her husband's return from prison despite threats that he would be rearrested before seeing freedom. Aleksei Kozorezov was finally released on June 20. No sooner had Mr. Kozorezov returned to his family than the KGB raided their home and conducted a search, this time looking for Mrs. Kozorezova. Local pastors promptly advised her to go into hiding and continue her ministry as director of the Council of Prisoners' Relatives.

ARCHIVES

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Over the years, Christians in the Soviet Union have sent thousands of petitions to the Soviet government detailing incidents of persecution and requesting that it be curtailed. In response to such pleas, the authorities only intensified the terror against Christians.

But the Soviet government is sensitive to the voice of the West. We must protest this injustice and boldly defend the innocent victims. An awareness of the suffering of innocent people is accompanied by the responsibility to act on their behalf. We no longer have the right to remain indifferent to the plight of those undergoing severe persecution for their faith in God.

As citizens of the free world, we must do everything within our power to ease their suffering and defend their right to believe. This is what God is calling us to do: "Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, O hold them back" (Prov. 24:11).

OPPRESSION OF CHURCHES IN SOVIET-OCCUPIED LATVIA

**Testimony by
Vilis Varsbergs
Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Paragraph 6 of the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Latvian SSR states:

The clergy and the congregations shall strictly observe all state legislation concerning the Church and its discipline. Such observance is the foundation of the well-being of the Church and the congregations.

Archbishop Arnolds Lusis, head of the Latvian Lutheran Church in Exile, in a paper "A Church under the Cross" comments:

A constitutional provision which says that "the foundation of the well-being of the Church and its congregations is the observance of the legislation of a State power which is hostile to the Church points up, in a rather cynical way, the actual dependence of the Church upon the power of that State, and its control.

That power and control of the state over the Lutheran and all other churches in Soviet-occupied Latvia is defined in the Decree on Religious Associations of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic adopted by the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the LSSR on October 28, 1976. The implications of that decree are made dramatically clear by a paper prepared by Latvian Lutheran pastors in Minneapolis titled "What If the Soviet Law on Religious Associations Would Be Applied to Your Church?" Their paper follows.

**What If the Soviet Law on Religious Associations
Would be Applied to Your Church?**

We trust that this will not happen, but the answer to this question will help you to understand the situation of your Christian brethren in

the Soviet Union. Paragraphs cited have been taken from the newly amended Soviet law on religious associations.

Sunday school and catechetical classes will be abolished. (par. 17c)

You will be forced to discontinue Bible study groups, prayer circles, small group discussions, youth and women's organizations. (par. 17c)

If your congregation has a playground or a library -- these facilities will be closed. (par. 17c)

The congregational administration will be reorganized. There no longer will be various committees and boards. Instead your congregation will be governed by a single committee of three persons, elected by an open ballot; the Soviet government can remove any individual from this committee. (pars. 13, 14)

Christian charity and social ministry will be discontinued. Giving "material support" to other members of the congregation will be prohibited. (par. 17a, b)

Your church building will be nationalized. You may continue to use your church if the government approves a contract. (par. 28)

Although your church building now belongs to the state, all maintenance expenses have to be paid by your congregation. On top of that, you are to pay taxes for the property you use. (par. 29b)

Since your congregation is not regarded as a legal entity, individual members will have to accept personal responsibility in regard to the upkeep and operation of the church building. (pars. 28, 29, 31, 32)

You must be especially careful that no religious books are found on the church premises, except those directly used in conducting the worship service. (par. 17)

You must be sure that you have an updated inventory of all objects used in worship services. These do not belong to the congregation, but to the state. If an object is no longer usable, it may be discarded only after a permit is granted by the state. (pars. 25, 29e)

Government representatives may inspect your church building at any time, except when being used for a church service. (par. 29f)

The congregation will have to pay insurance premiums, but in case of fire, the insurance payment will be made to the government and not to the congregation. The congregation may receive only a part of the money, or none at all. (par. 33)

The government may void your contract for leasing your church building before its expiration date. (par. 38)

You may also lose your church building whenever the government decides it is needed for state or public purposes. (par. 36)

In case your church building is closed, all valuable property will be taken over by the state and only less expensive articles may be used in other congregations. (par. 40)

From now on, your annual congregational meeting will require a permit from the local government. (par. 12)

Conferences involving delegates from various congregations will need permission from the proper agency on the federal level. (par. 20)

As a pastor you will have only limited opportunities to minister. You may conduct a religious ceremony in a hospital only if the person involved is seriously ill and if an isolated room can be arranged for this purpose. A special permit will be required to conduct any religious ceremony outside the church premises (in an apartment or a home). (pars. 58, 59)

Your pastoral activities will be geographically restricted. To conduct pastoral work without permission in another city will be regarded as a transgression of the law. (par. 19)

If you want to conduct an outdoor church service, once again, you will need a special permit. (par. 59)

And, of course, you MUST register your congregation. In order to comply, you will need 20 brave persons to sign the initial application. It is bravery indeed to submit such an application in an atheistic society. If approved (and there is no guarantee that it will be done), your congregation will be supervised by the proper Soviet agency. (pars. 2, 3, 64)

These are, by no means the only limitations and restrictions. In addition to the above-mentioned Soviet law on religious associations, there are other laws and government-supported practices that are aimed at limiting, if not eliminating religion in the Soviet Union.

(Paragraph numbers given in this paper refer to the decree of the Russian SSR. Only the sequence of paragraphs changes; the substance of the decree of the LSSR is the same as that of the Russian SSR.)

MOSLEMS IN THE USSR

Testimony by
Henry L. Mason III
Practicing Attorney, Chicago, Ill.

The purpose of this testimony is to provide a basic outline of the current status of the Moslem peoples of the USSR. It makes no claim to originality, and should be regarded merely as a starting point for understanding these important ethnic groups, which are largely unknown to the West.¹

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Moslems constitute a large and distinct group within the USSR.²

The Uzbeks are by far the most numerous of the Soviet Moslem peoples. There are, however, no less than eight Moslem ethnic groups with more than a million members (Table 1). Five of these peoples (Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tadjiks, Turkmen and Kirgiz) reside in Soviet republics located in Central Asia. One (Azerbaijanis) has its home in a Caucasian Soviet republic on the west shore of the Caspian Sea. The remaining two (Tatars and Bashkirs) are located in "autonomous" republics in the west-central region of the RSFSR.³ A distinctive characteristic of the Moslem peoples is their overwhelming concentration within the borders of their national republics; over 90 percent (and in some cases more than 99 percent) of the five major Central Asian peoples (Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tadjiks, Turkmen and Kirgiz) live in Soviet Central Asia.

A second important feature of the Moslem peoples is their extremely rapid growth. While the Russian population of the Soviet Union grew by only 6.4 percent between 1970 and 1979, most of the Moslem peoples increased at rates three to five times higher (Table 2). Partly as a result of these growth rates, the Russian presence as a percentage of the population has been declining in the Central Asian republics and

Table 1

MAJOR SOVIET MOSLEM PEOPLES

	<u>Numbers</u>
1. Uzbeks	13,000,000
2. Kazakhs	7,000,000
3. Tatars	6,500,000
4. Azerbaidjanis	5,500,000
5. Tadjiks	3,000,000
6. Turkmen	2,250,000
7. Kirgiz	1,500,000
8. Bashkirs	1,500,000

Table 2

PERCENT INCREASE OF
SOVIET MOSLEM PEOPLES, 1970-79

1. Uzbeks	35.5
2. Kazakhs	23.7
3. Tatars	6.5
4. Azerbaidjanis	25.0
5. Tadjiks	35.7
6. Turkmen	33.0
7. Kirgiz	31.3
8. Bashkirs	10.6

Table 3

MOSLEM PEOPLES IN AND OUTSIDE THE SOVIET UNION

	<u>In the USSR</u>	<u>Outside the USSR</u>
Uzbeks	13,000,000	1,500,000 (Afghanistan)
Kazakhs	7,000,000	500,000 (China)
Azerbaidjanis	5,500,000	5,000,000 (Iran)
Tadjiks	3,000,000	4,500,000 (Afghanistan)
Turkmen	2,250,000	1,000,000 (Af., Iran, Turkey)
Kirgiz	2,000,000	100,000 (Af., China)

Azerbaidjan.⁴ If these declines continue, within 20 years the European population in these areas will be reduced to an insignificant and scattered minority.

Another significant factor affecting Soviet Moslems is the presence of large numbers of their ethnic and linguistic kinsmen outside the USSR. Thus each of the principal Soviet Moslem nationalities is represented in one or more of the Soviet Union's southern neighbors (Table 3). In essence, therefore, the Soviet border runs through the heart of ethnic territories that were previously bound together by ties of language, culture and religion.

Of the approximately 45,000,000 Soviet Moslems, the overwhelming majority are Sunnis belonging (as do the Turks) to the Hanafi rite. Azerbaidjanis (approximately 70 percent of whom are Shiite) constitute the principal exception.

Most Soviet Moslems speak Turkic languages or dialects (Turkic languages, in fact, are second only to Slavic in geographical extent and number of speakers in the USSR). The principal exception is Tadjik, a language "so closely akin to Persian that [Tadjiks] claim it is Persian."⁵ Traditionally, the Central Asian literary languages all used the Arabic script.

For many centuries the Central Asian peoples were an integral and important part of Turko-Persian culture. Islam was introduced to the Caucasus and Central Asia by Arab conquerors in the eighth century, and had penetrated to the southern Urals (modern Bashkiria) by the twelfth century. The Persian literary language was developed in Bukhara, and the Islamic philosopher Avicenna was a native of Khoesm in modern Uzbekistan. As Professor Bennigsen put it:

The rise in culture was accompanied by an exceptional economic flowering and by vast political power. The Transcaucasus and Central Asia were located at the crossroads of the great medieval caravan routes: the Silk Road and the Spice Road connected the eastern Mediterranean (and Europe as well) with India and China, and the Fur Road joined western Siberia and northeast Russia with Iran, Byzantium and the Arab countries.

This powerful, flourishing and dazzlingly sophisticated world, which had discovered astronomy and Aristotle, and had created algebra, constituted a single entity. No political, racial or linguistic barriers divided it. The Turkestani Avicenna, for example, was thoroughly at home in Cairo and Medina, while Abu Hamid al-Garnati, an Arab from Grenada, had no cause to consider himself a foreigner on the shores of the Volga.⁶

The Mongol conquest of the thirteenth century had approximately the

same effect on the Moslems of Central Asia as the Viking conquests had had on northern Europe four centuries earlier. For approximately a hundred years Islam ceased to be the religion of the ruling classes, and only the activity of Sufi (Dervish) brotherhoods preserved it among the people. Ultimately, however, the Mongols were absorbed by the Turks just as the Danes were absorbed by the English and the Normans ("Northmen") by the French:

Although the leaders were Mongols, they drew into their successful armies many Turkic tribes. The result was a Turkicization of speech among the Mongols who remained in the west and the disappearance of Mongol speech in western Central Asia.⁷

In the early fourteenth century Islam was accepted by the Golden Horde and the Jaghatai kaganate, and a new flowering commenced that ended only with the European discovery of sea routes to the East more reliable and cheaper than the old caravan trails. By the sixteenth century, however, the Muscovite kingdom had begun to expand eastward (Kazan was captured by Ivan the Terrible in 1552), and for the next three hundred years hardly a decade passed without wars or revolts involving one or another of the Moslem peoples (Tashkent fell to the Russians only in 1864). After the Bolshevik revolution violent clashes took place well into the 1930s (the so-called basmachi uprisings), and Moslems are currently fighting the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.⁸

It is against this background that Soviet nationality policy in the Moslem areas of the USSR should be considered.

SOVIET POLICY TOWARD THE MOSLEM PEOPLES

Soviet nationality policy may be conveniently summarized by recalling the infamous Stalinist slogan: "National in form, socialist (or proletarian) in content."⁹ In essence, this means that ethnic, linguistic, and cultural traditions will be tolerated to the extent -- and only to the extent -- that the Bolsheviks deem them compatible with Marxist-Leninist ideology, socialist economic and administrative policy, and the continued prerogatives of the Communist ruling elite.

The methods employed by the Soviets in executing their nationality policy can conveniently be considered under five heads: (1) cultural isolation, (2) political division, (3) antireligious coercion and propaganda, (4) extirpation and (5) assimilation. Each of these methods has been applied to Soviet Moslems as well as to other Soviet ethnic groups (including, to a significant degree, Russians).

Cultural Isolation

Virtually the first step after Soviet conquest of the Caucasus and

Central Asia was to sever the connections between the Moslem peoples and their coreligionists outside the country. The border was tightly sealed, and in 1920 the pilgrimage to Mecca (as well as to Shiite holy places in Iran and Iraq) was banned. The previously flourishing movement of students between religious study centers (medressehs) outside the USSR (e.g., Cairo and Fez) and within the country (e.g., Tashkent) was reduced to a trickle.

In 1928 Soviet Moslem alphabets were changed from Arabic to Latin. Since the use of the Arabic alphabet had tended to facilitate written communication between speakers of related Turkic dialects (Arabic, like Hebrew, ordinarily does not indicate vowel sounds), Moslems in the USSR became increasingly isolated from their kinsmen outside the country as well as from their traditional literary heritage:

Although the Arabic lack of interest in vowel sounds contrasted strongly with the emphasis placed on vowels in Turkic vocalic harmony, these limitations of the Arabic alphabet had the effect of obscuring to some extent dialectical differences among the Turkic languages. . . . However, to a Soviet government that had had to establish its control over Central Asia by force, the dangers soon became obvious of allowing its people to continue the use of an alphabet that at once separated them from Russians and gave them a common mode of expression with Muslim neighbors outside the Soviet Union. . . .

The adoption of the Latin alphabet coincided with the campaign undertaken throughout the Soviet Union to eradicate illiteracy. . . . Many hundreds of thousands of adults and school children learning to read for the first time knew only the Latin alphabet. Unfamiliar with the Arabic script, they were cut off from the classic works that comprised the literary tradition of Central Asia. The Koran and its commentaries became closed books, as did the Persian poetry of Sa'di, Firdausi and Hafiz and the scholarly works produced during the golden days of learning in Samarkand and Bukhara. For the generations beginning their education in Soviet schools and adult education classes, the literary blackboard was wiped clean, ready for a new writing.¹⁰

The "new writing" contemplated by the Bolsheviks was of course largely political propaganda. "An illiterate person," as Lenin put it, "stands aloof from politics and must therefore learn the alphabet. Without this there can be no politics." In a booklet issued during the civil war for the instruction of illiterates, the first 13 pages described the letters of the alphabet, while page 14 contained a story about kulaks, the bourgeoisie and the cursed czarist regime.¹¹ Meanwhile, importation of material printed in Arabic was prohibited by government decree in 1925.

Political Division

A related policy involved splitting the Moslem peoples within the USSR. Prior to the Bolshevik revolution, national identity (in the Western sense) was almost entirely lacking among Moslems. The inhabitants of Central Asia tended to call themselves generally "Moslems" or "Turks" or, if subordinate distinctions were called for, to use tribal, clan or purely local designations.

The Soviet authorities were not slow to recognize the potential threat implicit in a common Moslem identity among their Central Asian subjects, and in 1924 Moscow undertook to divide the region into six "nation-states": Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenia, Tadjikistan and Karakalpakia. This radical distortion of traditional Moslem culture was followed by attempts to create new "national heroes" and "literary languages" in order to divide each individual ethnic group from its neighbors. Persons resisting this policy were arrested and liquidated as "Pan-Turkic nationalists," and the entire "literacy" operation was (and is) proclaimed as a triumph for the liberating effects of socialism:

In the mountain auls of the Caucasus and the kishlaks of Tadjikistan, in the nomad tents of Kazakhstan and in Chukotsk settlements -- everywhere the toilers of various ethnic groups were taught to read and write. People learned to read and write who, before the revolution, didn't even have their own literary languages.¹²

In 1939 the Latin alphabet was changed to Russian (with extensive individual modifications) for all the Moslem languages, which eliminated the last literary connection with the outside world and splintered even further the linguistic cohesion of the affected peoples:

Turkey's adoption of a similar Latin alphabet aroused new fears in Soviet leaders. There was a potential danger that a new Pan-Turkic literature might develop in the Latin alphabet and that this new script, like the Arabic one before it, might attract the Central Asian peoples toward Turkey and away from Russia. . . .

In 1939-40, therefore, the Soviet government replaced the Latin alphabet with new scripts based on the Cyrillic alphabet. By such a substitution, it was explained, students would be spared the labor of learning two different alphabets. This change in alphabet made it possible to introduce diverse symbols for Turkic sounds not found in the Cyrillic alphabet. Whereas in the Unified Turkic Latin Alphabet one symbol was employed for the same phoneme throughout the Turkic languages, with the introduction of the Cyrillic alphabet, a different symbol was introduced for each language in which the phoneme was found. The applica-

tion of this policy to Karakalpak to differentiate it from Kazak resulted in such phonetic ineptness that reforms in Karakalpak orthography had to be initiated in 1954.¹³

At the present time Soviet Islam is divided into approximately 28 peoples utilizing the same number of "literary languages" (Table 4). The resulting babel is obviously designed as a powerful inducement for "all the peoples and ethnic groups of the USSR [to] have voluntarily chosen [sic] the Russian language as the common language of communication and cooperation,"¹⁴ as well as a source of mutual miscomprehension and distrust among the non-Russian peoples. On this basis the Soviet government asserts that the Moslem question has been "finally solved" by successfully dividing the previously existing commonality.

Antireligious Coercion and Propaganda

In addition to policies of isolation and division, the Moslem community has been subjected to the customary Soviet measures of compulsion, confiscation and coercion:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1920 | Pilgrimages banned. |
| 1924 | Islamic and tribal courts abolished. |
| 1928 | Religious schools closed. |
| 1930 | Charitable and educational funds confiscated. |
| 1932 | Persecutions of believers and clergy commenced. |

Approximately 15,000 religious schools disappeared during this period, while the number of mosques, which in 1912 amounted to approximately 26,000 (served by approximately 45,000 clergy), had been reduced to less than 2,000 by 1941. Moslem religious leaders were accused of a variety of offenses ranging from "parasitism" and "counterrevolutionary sabotage" to spying for Japan, Germany and England.

Although a brief period of relative religious toleration occurred during World War II, the last years of Stalin's rule were marked by a virulent assault on the cultural traditions of the Central Asian peoples:

After being deprived of their history, the non-Russian peoples would also, after 1951, be dispossessed of their cultures, which would be denounced as elements of national differentiation that served to orient these people to the past and to set them apart from their "elder brother." This attack on the cultural plane was basically directed against the Moslem peoples, who were suspected of being linked through their culture with a broader Islamic world to which Russians were alien. The Stalinist compromise with respect to the culture of the peoples of the USSR -- "proletarian in content, national in form" -- had, particularly since the war years, been construed by the peoples concerned with emphasis on the

Table 4

SOVIET MOSLEM PEOPLES AND LANGUAGES

	<u>People</u>	<u>Approximate Population</u>	<u>Language Type</u>
1.	Uzbek	13,000,000	Turkic
2.	Kazakh	7,000,000	Turkic
3.	Tatar	6,500,000	Turkic
4.	Azerbaijani	5,500,000	Turkic
5.	Tadjik	3,000,000	Iranian
6.	Turkmen	2,250,000	Turkic
7.	Kirgiz	2,000,000	Turkic
8.	Bashkir	1,500,000	Turkic
9.	Chechen	850,000	Caucasian
10.	Osetin	550,000	Iranian
11.	Avar	500,000	Caucasian
12.	Lezgin	400,000	Caucasian
13.	Kabardin-Cherkess	325,000	Caucasian
14.	Karakalpak	310,000	Turkic
15.	Dargin	300,000	Caucasian
16.	Kumyk	230,000	Turkic
17.	Uighur	215,000	Turkic
18.	Ingush	190,000	Caucasian
19.	Karachaev	135,000	Turkic
20.	Kurd	120,000	Iranian
21.	Adygei	115,000	Caucasian
22.	Lak	105,000	Caucasian
23.	Abkhaz	100,000	Caucasian
24.	Tbasaran	80,000	Caucasian
25.	Nogai	65,000	Turkic
26.	Dungan	55,000	Chinese-Tibetan
27.	Abazin	30,000	Caucasian
28.	Tat	25,000	Iranian

second clause, and national forms were incontestably increasing. In 1951 the Soviet authorities subjected Moslem national epics, the symbols of entire national cultures, to systematic criticism and ordered them prohibited. The attack began in the spring of 1951 with the epic poem Dede Korkut, which recounted the history of the Oghuz -- it was condemned for "clericalist, pan-Turkish and anti-popular" tendencies. In the summer of the same year came the turn of the Turkmen epic Korkut Ata, a local variant of Dede Korkut. Early in 1952 the Uzbeks saw the prohibition of Alpamysh, which sings of the struggle of the Kungrat against the Buddhist Kalmyks, and the Kazakhs lost their entire epic cycle: Er Sain, Chora Batyr and Koblandy Batyr. Shortly afterward came the turn of the Kirgiz, whose epic poem, Manas, recounts the struggle of the Moslem nomads against the Kalmyks, who are elsewhere called Chinese.¹⁵

This campaign, in turn was followed by a new wave of religious persecution under Khrushchev.¹⁶ Most of the still operating mosques were closed between 1954 and 1964 (the number remaining open is now less than 500), and a massive anti-Islam propaganda campaign was commenced. After some relaxation during the Brezhnev years, this campaign has again intensified subsequent to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.¹⁷

Soviet antireligious propaganda can be divided into two types. The first, although used against Islam, is generically applicable to other faiths as well: religion is the "opium of the people" and represents an "idealist, reactionary ideology" which serves the interests of "exploiters" and is contrary to "scientific socialism" as set forth by Marx and Lenin. In addition, the Soviets continue to employ the childish sort of argument favored by Khrushchev (e.g., "Yuri Gagarin flew into space and didn't find Allah there").

The second type of propaganda is directed specifically against Islam, and presents it as singularly conservative, fanatic, authoritarian and unhealthy (e.g., fasting and circumcision). Islam is also claimed to be a foreign import imposed upon the Central Asian peoples by Arabs, Ottomans and Persians, which in addition perpetuates outmoded artistic, cultural and social traditions by encouraging, for example, undue deference to the elderly and seclusion of women.

The antireligious apparatus is vast and expensive. In addition to the innumerable lectures,¹⁸ billboards, posters and other means of mass communication, almost 200 antireligious books and pamphlets were published in 1982 alone. Of these, 44 (22.6 percent) were specifically directed against Islam.

Extirpation

In several cases the Soviet authorities have undertaken to uproot

Table 5
DEPORTATIONS OF SOVIET MOSLEM PEOPLES

<u>Date</u>	<u>People</u>	<u>Population Deported</u>
November, 1943	Karachaevs	85,000
February, 1944	Chechens	450,000
February, 1944	Ingush	130,000
March, 1944	Balkars	45,000
March, 1944	Ossetins	?
March, 1944	Cherkess	?
March, 1944	Avars	?
May, 1944	Crimean Tatars	300,000
November, 1944	Meskhets	200,000

Moslem peoples en masse and deport them to distant and climatically hostile areas of the country. The peoples affected and the dates of the deportations are shown in Table 5. Casualties as a result of these operations were extremely heavy, reaching levels as high as a quarter of the persons deported. After the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, many of the deportees were "rehabilitated" and allowed to return to their homes. The Crimean Tatars and Meskhet Turks constitute significant exceptions.¹⁹

Assimilation

Assimilative pressures constitute the "affirmative" aspect of Soviet nationality policy and are designed to integrate the Moslem population into Soviet society. It would be a serious mistake to regard assimilation as a mere continuation of the Russification policy of the czars; instead the goal is to create what Leonid Brezhnev called "a new historic human community -- the Soviet people." "Soviet people," in turn, are supposed to reflect a culture based upon a "synthesis of the progressive elements of the old progressive culture of each given ethnic group with the new interethnic forms born in the socialist epoch." In short, the resulting society should be Soviet and socialist rather than Russian.²⁰ The basic method is to create a pan-Soviet cultural environment of "interethnic" and "socialist" content.

The practical operation of this policy is well illustrated in the ongoing effort (begun in earnest in the late 1950s) to destroy traditional religious holidays and festivals and to replace them with new, nonreligious rituals.²¹ Although the campaign encompasses everything from St. John's Eve rituals in the Ukraine to bear festivals among the Khanty people and shagaa celebrations in Tuva, in the Moslem regions a major focus has been the Nau Ruz spring New Year festival. After

originally abolishing Moslem public holidays in the 1920s (only to find that Nau Ruz and other celebrations continued to be observed within the family), the Soviets resolved to neutralize the festival by altering its religious character. As stated by the Soviet ethnologists Kampars and Zakovich:

Traditional holidays and rituals with new content, or modern celebrations on traditional foundations, are accepted by an ethnic group significantly more quickly and successfully than those which are created de novo. It is very important to take into consideration the progressive elements of traditional rituals when considering how to combat outmoded and noxious customs and ceremonies.

Thus in 1964 it was announced that "Hammer and Sickle Day," which has been originally introduced in the Ukraine, would be transferred to Uzbekistan as well:

The collective farmers welcomed the guests with bread and salt. Folk instruments sounded and a wind ensemble performed. After welcoming greetings in the clubhouses the ceremonial portion of the holiday was held; the collective farmers and the workers exchanged gifts, and pennants were awarded the best labor collectives. An agreement for socialist competition was concluded between a house construction combine, a leather goods factory and the "Communism" collective farm. Representatives of the toilers of Tashkent's Chilanzarsk District pledged to successfully fulfill the seven-year plan and to provide comradely assistance to the state and collective farms under their sponsorship.

Upon the conclusion of the ceremonial portion of the holiday everyone was invited into the field for the ritual of plowing the first furrow; both urbanites and collective farmers rode the tractors. This ritual was following by an invitation to an amateur concert given by the urbanites and collective farmers. The organizers arranged games and other attractions. Professional workshops were organized. Before a movie was shown a lecture was read on atheist and international subjects.²²

Not surprisingly, these "new traditions" have met with both active opposition and sullen resistance. Nonetheless, their sheer pervasiveness is intended to have an inevitable effect. The 1968 statement of the Ukrainian writer Valentin Moroz could easily be echoed by Soviet Moslems:

Recently they are taken up creating (!) new traditions. We are snowed under with phrases, each more senseless than the one before: "The House of Happiness," "The Spring Festival of the Laborers". . . . Creating traditions is as senseless as

making a cultural revolution; 'culture' and 'revolution' are incompatible and contradictory concepts. Culture connotes centuries of development and is a process which cannot be hurried; every revolutionary interference in this area is destructive. Traditions cannot be "created"; they are formed over centuries. It is possible to drive people into a clubhouse and proclaim some kind of inane Swineherd's or Milkmaid's Day in place of Easter, but it won't be a holiday; it will be nothing but one more collective farm meeting with one more drunken binge to follow. There won't be enough spiritual content, enough atmosphere, for a holiday; that is something that takes more than a single century to create. They have crippled and muddled the atmosphere of Christmas and Easter -- in the Ukrainian villages it has already been forgotten what Christmas is.²³

The question, then, is the degree to which the Soviet state "has succeeded -- not so much in creating a new integration -- as in destroying previous relationships."²⁴

SOVIET MOSLEMS TODAY

The pressures described above have obviously had some effect on the religious environment of Soviet Moslems, but the degree of Bolshevik success is difficult to determine -- there exists the view that Soviet policy is in fact producing a resurgence of Islamic identity.²⁵ In any event, Professor Bennigsen suggests that Soviet Moslems can be divided into the following groups on the basis of the level of their religious consciousness:

1. Convinced believers ("fanatics," in the Soviet view, "who maintain and disseminate the traditional idea that religion is a necessary part of human life. . .") are intolerant of atheists, strictly observe the precepts of the Koran and refuse to participate in the social and cultural life of Soviet society. They are mostly members of the older generation or of Sufi sects (tarikats). They are believed to constitute approximately 12 percent of the Moslem population.

2. Traditional believers, who carry out the prescribed prayers and observe the Ramadan fast and the traditional customs, but who do not actively seek to propagate the faith. Traditional believers may constitute about 14 percent of Moslems.

3. Irregular believers, who believe in God and observe religious moral doctrines but are erratic in their observance of Islamic ritual. They are principally educated peasants or urban workers, and constitute perhaps 15 percent of Moslems.

4. Nonbelievers who nonetheless adhere to some of the rites and observances of Islam (circumcision, religious funerals for their

relatives, holidays). They amount to approximately 18 percent of the Moslem population.

5. Nonbelievers who observe certain religious customs under social pressure and call themselves Moslems to avoid ostracism. Approximately 21 percent of the population.

6. Atheists, who publicly proclaim their nonbelief, but who in large part continue to practice circumcision and burial in Moslem cemeteries. Approximately 20 percent of the population.

Religious belief appears to be higher in the Caucasus than in Central Asia, among women than among men, and among persons over 40 than among the young. Curiously, city dwellers are often more religious than the peasantry. In areas heavily influenced by Sufism (Dagistan, the Chechen region, southern Kirgizia and Turkmenia), the proportion of convinced believers is greater.

The five pillars of the faith (usal ud-din) are practiced to varying degrees depending largely on the public or private nature of the observance:

1. The profession of faith (la ilah illa Allah, wa Muhammad rasul Allah -- There is no God but Allah, and Muhammed is his prophet) is virtually immune to discovery since it is simple, easily remembered, and can be made at any time.

2. The five daily prayers. Even before the Bolshevik conquest the daily prayers were not strictly observed in rural areas, and as observable acts they are particularly subject to public attack as "absurd archaisms." They cannot be entirely prohibited, however, and some believers have become accustomed to praying twice a day -- before dawn and after sunset.²⁶ Alternatively, prayers may be performed within the family circle or in the underground chapels of the Sufi brotherhoods.

3. Fasting during Ramadan. Although this practice is violently attacked by the Soviets (partly because it reduces labor efficiency), it has never been officially banned. It is estimated that it is observed by a significant percentage of the populace (40-60 percent in rural areas), even by atheists who view it as a national tradition or who are constrained by politeness from eating in the presence of believers.

4. Alms (zakat) are strictly forbidden by the Soviet authorities (paupers, officially, do not exist in a socialist state). Donations are, however, made to mosques, to Sufi brotherhoods, and for other religious purposes. "The Grand Mufti of Central Asia, though appointed by the Soviet government, receives no subsidy from that authority. His funds, which are said to be ample, come from the people. The popular shrines of local saints, which by all accounts have many visitors, are also supported by the gifts of the people."²⁷

5. The pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca is prohibited except for token parties, but the distances and hardships involved are so great that even before the Revolution (and prior to the introduction of the railroad in czarist times) "most people fulfilled the requirement of the fifth pillar by making a tour of local saints' shrines, which Central Asian mullahs accepted as an equivalent to the journey to Mecca."²⁸ This practice has perforce increased under the Soviets and, since the holy places are largely outside the control of the "official" religious leaders, they are viewed by the Soviet authorities as "hotbeds of intolerable obscurantism."²⁹

In addition, Moslem holidays are widely if often surreptitiously observed. These include Kichik Bayram (the end of the Ramadan fast), Qurban Bayram (commemorating Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac), Mavlud (the birth of Muhammad), the Shiite holiday of Ashura (celebrating the martyrdom of Hussein), and, as stated above, Nau Ruz (originally the Iranian solar New Year). Because of their ethnic coloration many atheists also observe these holidays. Virtually the entire population also practices circumcision and buries its dead in Moslem cemeteries.

OFFICIAL ISLAM

Official Islam, as its name implies, is sponsored by the state and is strictly controlled -- the only officially recognized Moslem institutions are four "Spiritual Directorates":

1. Central Asia and Kazakhstan, located in Tashkent (Hanafi rite Sunnis)
2. European Russia and Siberia, located in Ufa (Hanafi rite Sunnis)
3. North Caucasus and Dajestan, located in Makhach-Kale (Shahi'iya rite Sunnis)³⁰
4. Transcaucus, located in Baku (Hanafi rite Sunnis)

These Directorates oversee approximately 1500-2000 clergy and no more than 500 mosques (a pitifully small number for a population of more than 40,000,000), as well as two Islamic study centers with a minuscule number of students:

1. The Mir-i Arab medresseh in Bukhara, with approximately 50 students.
2. The Imam Ismail Al-Bukhair medresseh in Tashkent, with approximately 15 students.

In addition to very small editions of the Koran, the Spiritual Directorates also publish a quarterly journal, Moslems of the Soviet

East, in Arabic, English, French, Persian and Uzbek (in the Arabic script). As Professor Bennigsen points out:

It is an eloquent fact that there exists no Russian edition, while the Uzbek version is inaccessible to ordinary mortals. This interesting and sumptuous review is basically intended for the foreign reader and administrative personnel at the Spiritual Directorates.³¹

The Spiritual Directorates, of course, also serve as loyal Bolshevik propagandists vis-a-vis foreign Moslems:

Thus Moslem dignitaries serve as valuable intermediaries for the Soviet government, particularly in radio broadcasts abroad or on their frequent trips to Moslem countries. They appear to never tire of repeating that Islam in the Soviet Union is happy and free. Although their eloquence is mostly indistinguishable from agitprop propaganda, it has much greater effect when uttered by genuine Moslem ulemas.³²

PARALLEL ISLAM

Side by side with official Islam there exists the so-called "parallel Islam" (a term devised by Soviet specialists in 1965). The concept of parallel Islam embraces two distinct phenomena:

1. Religious activity (including proselytization) by the "convinced believers" described above, who are mostly older people undeterred by the sanctions of the Bolshevik state, and
2. Sufic brotherhoods (tarikats).

The Sufic brotherhoods³³ are in many cases of great antiquity. They constitute religious societies based on the strictest discipline between the murid (disciple) and his master -- in the words of the vivid Sufi precept, a disciple should be to his master "like a corpse in the hands of a washer." Although legally prohibited, the tarikats are not truly secret societies since their adherents are often marked by particular clothing or other indicia of membership. There are four major Sufi tarikats in the USSR:

The Naqishbandi, founded in the fourteenth century in Bokhara, is the most numerous and influential. Its area of activity includes Dagestan, the Chechen-Ingush region, Tatory and all of Central Asia. The famous nineteenth century Caucasian leader Shamil, who with his murids led a jihad against the Russians for years prior to his capture in 1859, was a Naqishbandi. The brotherhood was also responsible for organizing revolts and uprisings against the Russians in 1896 and against the Soviets in 1920-21.

The Qadiriya was founded in the twelfth century in Baghdad. Originally centered in the Chechen-Ingush region, it has spread to Kazakhstan and Kirgizia as a result of the 1944 deportations.

The two additional tarikats, both founded in the twelfth century are now found only in Central Asia. The Kubrawiyah is widespread in Turkestan while the Yassawiyah is located in Kirgizia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenia and parts of Kazakhstan. Many Yassawiyah adherents took part in the basmachi risings, and one of its splinter groups, the "brotherhood of the long-haired ishans," may have been responsible for the assassination of Sultan Ibragimov, the chairman of the Council of Ministers of Kirgiz SSR, on December 4, 1980.³⁴

In any event, it is clear that the Sufi tarikats are a major factor in the preservation of Soviet Islam. As a Tadjik specialist in anti-religious propaganda wrote in 1965: "The only religious survival which now prevents the final triumph of scientific materialism in the republic is faith in the ishans (sheikhs of the Sufi order)."³⁵

CONCLUSION

In an area where facts are cloudy and trends are disputed,³⁶ predictions by a foreigner are both risky and presumptuous. What does seem clear is that so far Islam has weathered everything from Leninist propaganda to the unchecked coercion of the socialist state. As Professor Bennigsen has written:

The Moslem peoples have emerged victorious from their clashes with the various political policies -- from outright genocide to linguistic and cultural assimilation -- which have been pursued by the Soviet government for more than half a century.

. . . .

The result of sixty years of Soviet power in the Moslem countries has shown that neither rapprochement nor amalgamation can create true friendship among the Soviet peoples, and without such friendship the very existence of this last of the multinational empires is called into question. Indeed, every indication is that in the future, instead of increased unity centered around a soulless culture, the peoples of the USSR, particularly Moslems and Russians, are growing further apart. . . .

Solzhenitsyn's advice, to reduce the USSR to the dimensions of Russia in the time of Basil the Third by giving freedom to people who, in striving for liberation, will sooner or later take up arms to obtain it by force, will not be heeded so long as Marxism-Leninism remains the sole political ideology of the Soviet Union.³⁷

NOTES

1. The present summary is largely based on Bennigsen, Musul'mane v SSSR [Moslems in the USSR] (Paris, 1983); see also Bacon, Central Asians Under Russian Rule (Ithaca, 1966)
2. The term "Moslem," in accordance with the usage of the individuals involved, is used here to refer to a person belonging to one of the historically and culturally Islamic peoples. By itself, it does not necessarily mean that the individual concerned is a religious believer.
3. Unlike "Soviet" (or "Union") republics, "autonomous" republics need not border on non-Soviet countries.
4. See Katsenelinboign, "Nekotoryye Regional'niye Problem v SSSR [Certain Regional Problems in the USSR]," SSSR: Vnutrenniy Protivorechiya [USSSR: Internal Contradictions] 5 (1982), p. 10. In addition, since the Moslem population drinks considerably less than the rest of the USSR, it has to some degree escaped the demographic and medical catastrophe associated with Soviet alcoholism. See Powell, "The Emerging Health Crisis in the Soviet Union," Current History (October 1985); "Itog P'yanogo Bezumiya [The Result of Drunken Folly]," Possev, March 1985, p. 39; Alekseev, "Alkogol' v SSSR; Potrebleniye i Posledstviya [Alcohol in the USSR, Usage and Consequences]," SSSR: Vnutrenniy Protivorechiya 5 (1982), p. 51.
5. Bacon, Central Asians, p. 27.
6. Bennigsen, Musal'mane v SSSR, pp. 14-15.
7. Bacon, Central Asians, p. 4.
8. The suppression of the basmachis has been recently emphasized in connection with Soviet propaganda treatment of the Afghan war. See Bennigsen, "Islam v SSSR posle Vtorzheniya v Afganistan [Islam in the USSR after the Invasion of Afghanistan]," Forum 11 (1985), pp. 135-136. In official terminology, basmachestvo (from the Turkic basmak, raiding) is defined as: "An armed nationalist movement of well-to-do feudal elements, Moslem clergy, etc., under the control of Shura-i-Islam, whose goal was to overthrow Soviet power and to divide Central Asia from Soviet Russia. It was supported by foreign imperialists and reactionary circles in Turkey, China and Afghanistan. It was characterized by mass terror. It was basically crushed by the Red Army with the support of the population in 1922, and isolated groups were finally liquidated by 1933." Sovietskiy Entsiklopedicheskiy Slovar' [Soviet Encyclopedia Dictionary] (Moscow, 1980), p. 115.
9. See, e.g., Politicheskiy Slovar' [Political Dictionary] (Moscow, 1940), pp. 300, 371.

10. Bacon, Central Asians, pp. 190-191.
11. Heller and Nekrich, Utopiya u Vlasti [Utopia in Power] (London, 1982), vol. 1, p. 185.
12. Kratkaya Istoriya SSSR [A Short History of the USSR] (Moscow, 1983), vol. 2, pp. 253-254.
13. Bacon, Central Asians, pp. 191-192, 194.
14. SSSR - Entsiklopedicheskiy Spravochnik [The USSR - An Encyclopedic Handbook] (Moscow, 1982), p. 25.
15. Carrere d'Encausse, Une revolution, une victoire [A Revolution, a Victory] (Paris, 1972), pp. 371-372.
16. Neither Stalin's nor Khrushchev's malice was limited to Moslems. The 1951 campaign was expanded to include the infamous assault on "rootless cosmopolitans" (Jews) in 1952-53, while Khrushchev's offensive included renewed and venomous attacks on Christians.
17. Bennigsen, "Islam v SSSR posle Vtorzheniya v Afganistan," p. 130.
18. In 1951, during a period of relative religious "thaw," the Komsomol organization in the Tien Shan region of Kirgizia arranged no less than 3,000 antireligious lectures in a three-month period; in the same year the Association for the Propagation of Political and Scientific knowledge organized 10,000 such lectures in Uzbekistan (Bacon, Central Asians, pp. 142, 182).
19. It should be remembered that deportation was employed against several non-Moslem peoples as well, including Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Belorussians, Volga Germans and Kalmyks. And, as Khrushchev put it in the "secret speech" to the Twentieth Congress: "The Ukrainians avoided meeting this fate only because there were too many of them and there was no place to which to deport them. Otherwise, [Stalin] would have deported them also."
20. See, e.g., Sadomskaya, "Novaya Obryadnost' i Integratsia v SSSR [New Rites and Integration in the USSR]," SSSR: Vnutrenniye Protrvorechiya 1 (1981), pp. 67, 95.
21. "Soviet authorities have attempted to combat persistent folk beliefs and practices in several ways. First, new rituals have been introduced in the hope of replacing the old ones which had been such a vital part of traditional family and community life" (Bacon, Central Asians, pp. 180-181).
22. Sadomskaya, "Novaya Obryadnost," pp. 84-85. The deliberate intermixture of non-Uzbek folk customs ("bread and salt" and the "ritual of plowing the first furrow"), the inculcation of "socialist

content" ("plan fulfillment pledges" and "agreements for socialist competition"), and the "lecture on atheist subjects" should be particularly noted.

23. Quoted in *ibid.*, pp.90-91.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
25. Bacon, Central Asians, pp. 142, 175-176.
26. The Soviet-sponsored "official" Islamic Directorate has stated that the daily prayers are no longer obligatory (Bacon, Central Asians, p. 176).
27. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
29. Bennigsen, Musal'mane v SSSR, pp. 70-71.
30. The Moslems of Dagestan, unlike their Turkish or Iranian-oriented co-religionists, belong (like the Arabs) to the Sunni Shahi'iyah rite.
31. Bennigsen, Musal'mane v SSSR, p. 60.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
33. The term "Sufi" is derived from the Arabic word for wool and refers to the dress of Sufi teachers.
34. Bennigsen, "Islam v SSSR posle Vtorzheniya v Afganistan," pp. 138-139.
35. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 131.
36. See, e.g., Kulmagambelov, "Po povodu Natsional'nogo i Ekonomicheskogo Gneta v SSSR [Concerning National and Economic Oppression in the USSR]," Forum 12 (1985), p. 73. Although many commentators agree, for example, that Russians or Russian-speakers are given preferment in the Moslem republics, it is unclear what effect the demographic trends discussed in the first part of memorandum will have. See, e.g., Shikhi, "Prizyv Usilit' Rol' Russkogo Yazyka v Nerusskikh Respublikakh [The Call to Strengthen the Role of the Russian Language in the Non-Russian Republics]," Forum 15 (1985), 59.
37. Bennigsen, "Islam v SSSR posle Vtorzheniya v Afganistan," pp. 77, 78, 86.

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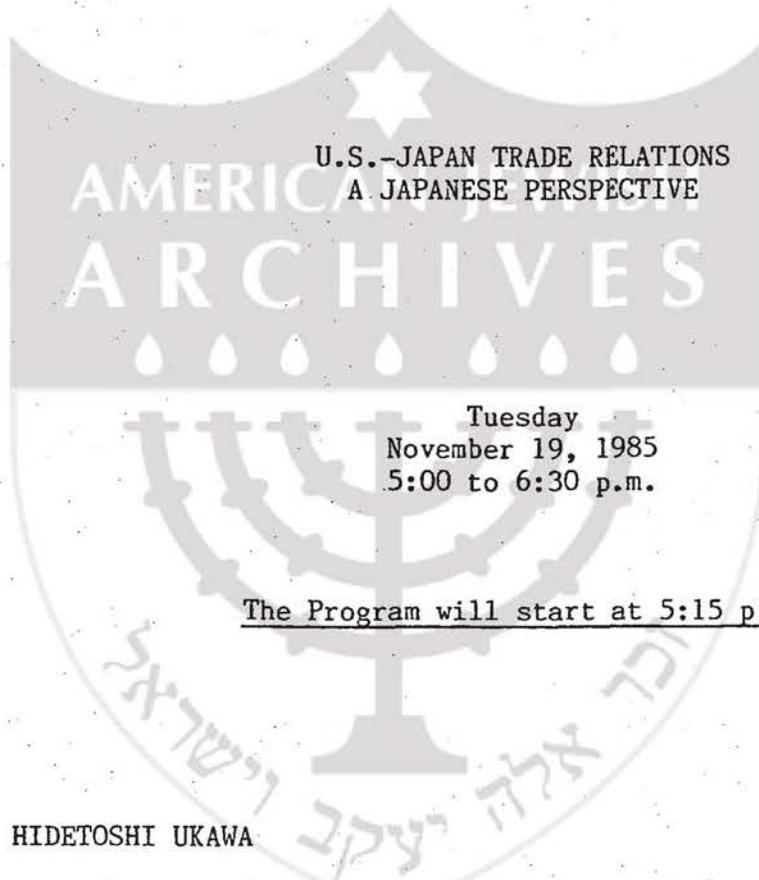
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HIDETOSHI UKAWA

Ambassador Hidetoshi Ukawa is the Consul General of Japan in New York. A specialist in international economic affairs, he has held several important posts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo, including Director of the Multilateral Cooperation Division, Director of the Second North American Division and Director of the First International Organizations Division (concerned with trade policy and GATT). Since 1981, Mr. Ukawa has been Director General for Scientific and Technological Affairs, in which post, as Ambassador and Governor of Japan, he served as Chairman of the Board of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna.

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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date November 27, 1985

to Richard Maass

from David Geller

subject AJC Soviet Jewry Task Force: Washington Agenda

Attached is the agenda for our day in Washington this Monday, December 2nd. Ambassador Rosenne returned to Washington earlier than expected and accordingly will be with us at our luncheon meeting.

Our delegation will include:

Richard Maass
Leo Nevas
Marc Tanenbaum

Hy Bookbinder
David Geller
Andrew Baker +
2 officers of
Washington Chapter

Billy Keyserling (NCSJ)
Mark Levin (NCSJ)

I'm planning to be in Washington quite early and will wait for you at the "C" Street entrance of the State Department.

cc: Leo Nevas
Marc Tanenbaum /
David Harris

DG/DG

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AJC TASK FORCE ON SOVIET JEWRY

Chairman: Richard Maass

AGENDA: Washington, D.C. - December 2, 1985

- 10:00 AM - **Ambassador Richard Schifter** - Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs
Room 7802
- 11:00 AM - **Mark Palmer** - Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs
Room 6219
- 12:30 PM - Lunch with Israel **Ambassador Meir Rosenne & Minister-Counselor Yehoshua Pratt**
Embassy Row Hotel
2023 Massachusetts Avenue
- 3:00 PM - **Ambassador Vencel Hazy** - Hungarian People's Republic
Hungarian Embassy
3910 Shoemaker St.
- 4:00 PM - **Ambassador Saul Polansky** - Deputy Chairman of U.S. Delegation to the Budapest Cultural Forum
Room 7515A

Moscow on The Potomac

By Wolf Blitzer

The Soviet diplomat from the Middle East desk of his country's Washington embassy had been trying to cultivate the editor of a Jewish paper for several weeks. It was clear that the editor knew little more than what could be read in *The New York Times* and, if he did know any secrets about the Middle East, he wouldn't share them.

It was also clear to the Russian that the editor regarded him as a probable KGB agent. Why then, the editor asked, did the Russian still want to meet with him? "Because," the diplomat responded, "you people have influence."

Soviet diplomats—as well as those from other Communist bloc countries, Latin America, the Arab world, Africa and elsewhere—have an inflated assessment of the influence of Israel and the American Jewish community on the direction of American foreign policy. They believe the Jewish lobby is almost all-powerful in pulling strings and getting its way.

This distorted notion is one that Israeli diplomats and American Jewish leaders are not all that anxious to dispel. After all, the more the diplomats believe that they can gain advantage for their governments by improving relations with Israel and its American Jewish supporters, the more likely they will be to do so.

Turkey, for example, facing opposition in Congress because of its policies vis-a-vis Greece and Cyprus, has privately asked Israel to help with the pro-Israel political Establishment. In the process, Turkish diplomats

have established a direct dialogue with American Jewish political activists in Washington and New York. The same is true for many other countries, especially several in Black Africa which have maintained decent, if unofficial, ties with Israel over the years. They have often quietly approached Israel to help them increase their support in Washington, particularly in Congress.

The Soviet Embassy in Washington operates very much like those of the more than a hundred other diplomatic outposts there—it tries to win friends and influence people for their government. However, unlike friendly allies, such as Britain, France or Israel, who are well received, the Soviet Union faces unusual obstacles. Because Soviet diplomats may not travel beyond a 25-mile radius outside their diplomatic base, except with special permission from the State Department, they have difficulty in reporting the pulse of the country. The same travel restrictions apply to Soviet diplomats posted at the United Nations and at Soviet consulates around the country.

In addition to the official Soviet-American hostility, prevalent since the end of World War II, there is the well-based assumption of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that at least one-third of all Soviet representatives in this country are spies of the KGB, the civilian intelligence organization, or the GRU, its military counterpart. American experts also assume that other Soviet diplomats, as well as nonofficial Russians—journalists,

trade representatives, airline and tourist personnel—are either spies or under strong pressure to undertake intelligence-related operations.

One never knows whether a Soviet diplomat is a spy working undercover as a commercial attache, secretary or administrative aide. Suspicion has closed many doors to visiting Soviet diplomats; they complain that they are not invited to meet various segments of American society and rarely make real American friends during their tour of duty here. One Soviet Embassy official said that during his four years in the United States, he was never invited to the home of a private American citizen.

These constraints do not prevent the Soviets from seeking to make contact with the American public. Their greatest activity occurs when official relations between the two countries



are relatively smooth. In recent weeks, for example, the Soviets have anxiously sought to improve their relations with the United States. Their public posturing in advance of the Reagan-Gorbachev summit was so obvious that there was speculation that Moscow was reassessing its long-standing hostility toward Israel and might even be prepared to reopen the door to increased Jewish emigration.

This would be a significant shift in Soviet policy, especially if it were to accept Israel's often-repeated request for direct flights to bring emigrants from the Soviet Union to Israel. The problem of Soviet Jews "dropping out" for the United States during stopovers in Vienna or Rome would be curtailed if Soviet Jews were flown directly to Israel.

Despite difficulties, the Soviets in Washington are not shy in their "outreach." They actively seek to establish communication with influential segments of the American society, including the Jewish community. There have been, in fact, direct contacts between the Soviet and Israeli Embassies in Washington, including several meetings over the past year between Israeli Ambassador Meir Rosenne and his Soviet counterpart, Anatoly Dobrynin.

Dobrynin has met with several American Jewish leaders, including Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress. It was Bronfman who recently visited Moscow to promote Soviet Jewish emigration and the lessening of the harassment of refuseniks.

The Soviets in Washington are also active in cultivating sources in the Jewish community. They seek meetings with influential legislative aides in Congress, many of whom are Jewish. They try to maintain a dialogue with Jewish professionals, especially those working for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the American Jewish Committee, B'nai B'rith and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Most of the time, these groups report their meetings to the FBI, which closely monitors Soviet activity in Washington.

Soviet diplomats—in Washington, at the UN and at consulates around the country—are routinely assigned to the Jewish or Israel portfolio. Usually they are Arabists, specialists on the Middle East who have served in the Arab world and are fluent in Arabic. In Washington, for example, Alexander Zotov and Alexander Ilyichev served for several years in Iraq, Syria and Libya and are familiar with the nuances of the Arab-Israeli conflict. They have been at their Washington posts since the 70's; once Soviet diplomats are specially trained, they stay at their assignment for a long time. Ambassador Dobrynin, for example, has been in Washington for 23 years and is the dean of the Washington diplomatic corps.

Soviet diplomats regularly make the rounds to find out what is happening in the Jewish community. They carefully scrutinize the American Jewish press and will often attend public lectures by prominent experts on Jewish and Israel-related topics—presumably to send a report back to Moscow.

Familiar Soviet faces pop up at conferences in Washington. They try to make personal contact with Jewish leaders, suggesting lunch as a follow-up. They don't always succeed, because the assumption they work for the KBG keeps people at a distance. When they do meet, the Soviets often argue that the Soviet Union is not anti-Israel—recalling its recognition of Israel in 1948—and then proceed to criticize Israeli policies.

Understandably, the Soviets are anxious to learn about the strategies of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, the Union of Councils for Soviet Jewry, AIPAC and other national activist organizations. "They have a pretty good grasp of what's going on in the Jewish community," says one American Jewish leader, who has often met with Soviet diplomats. "But, like so many other foreigners, they are still living under some serious illusions about the nature of the Jewish community and Israel." And without doubt, the Soviets in the United States will continue their efforts to penetrate and influence the "powerful" Jewish Establishment. ■

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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date December 4, 1985
to Marc Tanenbaum
from David Geller
subject AJC Task Force Visit to Washington - December 2

On Monday, December 2, a small group of lay leaders and staff representing the AJC Task Force on Soviet Jewry met with several government officials in Washington. The delegation included Richard Maass, chairman of the Task Force, Leo Nevas, chairman, CIR, David Geller, Hy Bookbinder, Andrew Baker, Marjorie Sonenfeldt. Billy Keyserling, a representative of the NCSJ, was also invited to participate. Our agenda included meetings with Ambassador Richard Schifter, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs; Mark Palmer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs; lunch with Israel Ambassador Meir Rosenne and Minister Counsellor Yehoshua Pratt; Ambassador Vencel Hazy, Hungarian People's Republic; and Ambassador Saul Polansky, Deputy Chairman of U.S. Delegation to the Budapest Cultural Forum.

According to Ambassador Schifter, President Reagan earned high marks for the persistence, patience and forthrightness with which he pushed the issue of human rights including the issue of Soviet Jews. Based on a reading of the notes of the several hours in which the two leaders met alone, over one hour was devoted to human rights. Even when the subject of Soviet Jews was not mentioned specifically, the issues that were discussed -- freedom of emigration, freedom to practice one's religion and learn one's culture, etc. -- were clearly referring to the problems of Jews in the U.S.S.R. Gorbachev seemed impatient but not pugnacious, and remained basically non-committal with the exception of agreeing to the reunion of spouses. Schifter said there was no question about the clarity of the message that was sent.

President Reagan seems persuaded that at this time "quiet diplomacy" is best. However, according to Schifter and Mark Palmer with whom we met later, "quiet diplomacy" referred to statements by the President and perhaps the Secretary of State, while others, including members of the State Department and Congress can and indeed ought to speak up unless some significant change takes place.

Asked about the delegation of 300 businessmen, including 20 heads of corporations who are going to the Soviet Union December 9, Schifter said that it is most important that we touch base with the Department of Commerce. He believes that Secretary Baldrige is knowledgeable and sympathetic to our concerns, but he's not sure about the others, and in general, businessmen tend to resist raising this issue with the Soviets. He cautioned that a number of deals were in the works and that a momentum could be built up that would be

difficult to stop. In other words, if the issue of Soviet Jews was not raised while these deals were being implemented, it could set a pattern for many future deals. Regarding the sale of high technology, he said that the Pentagon had been softening its attitude recently regarding oil drilling equipment and agri-tech items.

Schifter cautioned us to remember that notwithstanding all of the recent statements and rumors, nothing was given by the Soviets on the issue of Soviet Jews, and right now there is only speculation. The figures this month, that is for the month of November, are 128, only four more than in October, and we should be waiting for a significant change before we signal any willingness on our part to make concessions. He also cautioned us against falling into a "holding pattern" while waiting for possible movement after the Communist Party Congress in February, and then after the Summit in June.

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During our meeting with Mark Palmer, a number of the points raised by Schifter were repeated. Palmer was in Geneva and attended every major session with the exception of the private meetings. He said that Reagan had established a very good relationship with Gorbachev, and Palmer was most impressed that at the first session, as he described it, Reagan gave Gorbachev a "cold shower." That is, he came out quite strongly on a number of issues including human rights, Afghanistan and several others, which he insisted would have to be addressed and resolved if a meaningful and lasting relationship was to be developed. Reagan made his points clearly but not confrontationally and Palmer feels that a number of these issues will be addressed at the summer summit, which is likely to take place in June. In the meantime, there is another meeting that will soon take place between Secretary of State Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. Palmer was sure that the issue would be raised, not only because Secretary Shultz feels strongly on the issue, but also because he, Mark Palmer, was preparing the "talking points" for Shultz.

In speaking of the good relationship that had been established, Palmer mentioned that one of the things that had been very helpful was the improvement in the relationship between the State Department and the Pentagon in the persons of Assistant Secretary of State Rozanne Ridgeway and Richard Perle. The improvement in their relationship bodes well for the future.

Palmer also discussed reports indicating a change of the Administration's policy toward "quiet diplomacy." He, too, said that quiet diplomacy was for the President, but the "rest of us" should continue to act in an open and public manner when the situation calls for it.

He reported that Ilya Essas, a long-term refusenik and Hebrew teacher, had received permission to leave. He felt that this was a promising sign because, while Essas was not as well-known as Scharansky, he was, in fact, one of the more prominent refuseniks.

He said that from time to time there had been discussions about whether Gorbachev was an ideologue. In Geneva, Palmer learned that Gorbachev's wife Raisa, teaches Marxism-Leninism, and that both of them are, in fact, ideologues and this is something that should be borne in mind.

In relation to the various exchange programs that had been agreed upon, he noted that this time the Americans will be able to choose among the list of Soviet applicants. Previously it was really a one-way street, the Americans accepting anyone on the Soviet list, while the Soviets were allowed to pick and choose, occasionally barring Jewish applicants.

Asked about the Jesse Jackson intervention, Palmer felt that as far as the issue of Soviet Jews is concerned, it may have been helpful for Gorbachev to hear the concern expressed by a representative of a group considered "soft" on the Soviets.

He also told us that Qaddafi had tried to land in Geneva and was barred.

Responding to a question about the Budapest Cultural Forum he said that it went well and that members of the American delegation had spoken out on the issue of Soviet Jews. He praised especially the speech by an American Indian. He thought it was very interesting that Time magazine and the Herald Tribune are now sold publicly in Budapest. I asked about the rumors that he was being designated as ambassador to Hungary and he said that so far they were only rumors. He added that if indeed he is designated as ambassador, it is quite probable that Tom Simmons will succeed him as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs.

* * * * *

At a luncheon session with Ambassador Rosenne and Yehoshua Pratt, we discussed the spy incident, and Eastern Europe in addition to the Soviet Jewry issue. Regarding the Pollard incident, Rosenne felt that the issue will eventually quiet down. He felt that Secretary of State Shultz understands the complexity of the situation and the damage that can be caused if it is prolonged. He seems satisfied with the Israeli response to date. He noted that if the issue continues and both sides are forced to release confidential documents, the interests of both countries will suffer. He was very disturbed by a State Department briefing last Friday which was cited by NBC for a particularly vicious report against Israel.

Regarding Soviet Jews, Rosenne felt that the summit had positive results. He said that the present improvement in U.S.-U.S.S.R. relationships presents a greater opportunity to deal with the issue of Soviet Jews. Nevertheless and notwithstanding speculation and rumors, there has been no movement by the Soviets. In October, 124 emigrated; in November, 128; and the December figures don't look much better. He said that the Administration now seems committed to

a quiet diplomacy, and was not sure of the interpretations of Schifter and Palmer. He said it was extremely important to maintain contact with businessmen and if possible to insure that they are sensitized and informed on our issue prior to their meeting in Moscow December 9-11.

Yehoshua Pratt said that he did not feel as positive toward the Summit meetings. He said that the Soviets had made some positive gestures but only towards the Americans, and from which they will probably profit most. but absolutely no positive action regarding Jews. This is most worrisome. said Pratt, because a momentum in trade and cultural exchange can be set in motion which could ignore our Jewish concerns, and we have to make sure that that Soviet Jewry issue stays alive and intrusive. He suggested that following the U.S. Administration's example, we should also involve ourselves more in "quiet diplomacy" especially with businessmen. He expressed concern about the fact that at the meeting in Moscow a number of business deals will be finalized. In other words, preparations have been going on for some time and a momentum can be established which will be difficult to stop.

Regarding Eastern Europe and the reports that diplomatic relations will be established between Israel and Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, Ambassador Rosenne suggested several reasons for it. He said that East European countries are sorely in need of trade and economic assistance which they cannot get from the Soviets and are therefore reaching out in other directions. They also may hope to gain access to high technology by trading with Israel. A third reason could be a sign that the Soviets are interested in involving themselves in the Middle East issue through an international conference and that these first steps are a signal indicating that at the end of the tunnel is the reestablishment by the USSR of diplomatic relations with Israel.

* * * * *

Later, our group met with Ambassador Vencel Hazy of Hungary. He began the session with a long, defensive dissertation on the Budapest Cultural Forum referring to stories in the press, about the cancellation of an unofficial meeting of writers. He insisted that the NGO's could not be permitted to violate Hungarian law. He said that while they were not allowed to convene meetings in the official site of the Forum, nor were they allowed to distribute pamphlets publicly, there were in fact apartments made available for a number of these groups to meet. He insisted that it was a mistake to have expected that the example of Madrid would be replicated in Budapest. "We have a different system and different laws," he said. He expressed disappointment that no final document was adopted despite Hungary's effort. He reported that his government had drafted a short statement to which would be appended some 200 suggestions made by the various delegations and by some prominent individuals. However, while the overwhelming majority would have gone along with it, Romania objected, and according to the rules, no document could then be adopted. He reported that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. acted like the Cold War was still in being, instead of

a period before the Summit when the climate should have been more pleasant. However, he felt that the discussions that took place were important.

Regarding Israel, he insisted that things are progressing step by step. He repeated the statement that First Secretary Havasi had made when the AJC delegation had met with him in Washington, namely that "we did not sever relations with Israel, we suspended them." He also said that the resolution of the Mideast crisis would help or at least if Israel agrees to an international conference. He reminded us that the Hungarians are part of a bloc and if all the countries in that bloc (with the exception of Romania) severed relations at the same time, they would reestablish diplomatic relations also as a bloc. At the same time, however, he felt that relations between Israel and Hungary would continue to improve so that the reestablishment of relations would be a mere formality. He pointed out that the fact that many Jews in Israel speak Hungarian and are familiar with Hungarian culture would make the advancement of this relationship much smoother. He reminded us again that the AJC mission had been warmly received and hoped that we would reinforce that visit by further visits.

We then raised the possibility of a scholars-in-residence program to be implemented in Hungary by allowing a teacher from the U.S. or Israel to come to Budapest for a short period of time in order to give a course on Jewish history and culture to college students and faculty who are interested. We also suggested the possibility of sending college-age students and faculty to Israel or the United States for a specific period of time in order to take courses in Jewish studies. The Ambassador was sympathetic and said that this is something that we ought to be discussing with the Secretary of Culture Imre Miklos, whom we had already met in Budapest. He insisted that there is religious freedom in Hungary and that Jews who wish to go to the synagogue may do so, and seemed to misunderstand the point that we were making, namely, that among the young people who did not wish to go to the synagogue, there was a desire for knowledge of Jewish history and culture. He told us that Secretary of State Shultz will be going to Budapest on the 15th and indicated that we might want to get in touch with him before he left. He also said that for some time he had wanted to meet with Former Secretary of State Kissinger and would appreciate any help that we could give him toward that end.

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Our final meeting was with Ambassador Saul Polansky, who was the deputy to Ambassador Stoessel at the Budapest Cultural Forum. Regarding the fact that no final document was adopted, he said that the U.S. position was that it was better not to have a document than to have a bad one. He reported to us that there were three bilateral sessions with the U.S.S.R., and that in two of them the issue of Soviet Jews and other related issues were raised. He told us that a list of names have been given to the Soviets. He reported that Nathan Glazer had made a very important statement on the issue of Soviet Jews and that he was particularly impressed by the statement of an American Indian who was part of

the delegation and whose name is William Least Heat Moon. In response to a question on the role of our Western allies, he said that he recalls that the British and Germans were helpful and then offered to give us a list of the countries that had intervened on this issue. Polansky said that in general the Soviets had not been contentious, though Nikolai Fedorenko, Secretary of the Board of the Writers Union had objected. Nevertheless, he felt that it was important for the Russians and others to hear that the issue of Soviet Jews was not a narrowly supported one, but that people from all walks of life in the United States and of all religious, racial and ethnic groups were concerned.

In sum, Polansky felt that the Cultural Forum had been a good endeavor though the results were intangible. He felt that it was important for the Soviet delegates and especially the Eastern Europeans to be exposed to Western ideas. As a result of his previous experience in Eastern Europe and his observation at the Forum, he feels that the East Europeans relish the chance to be "out-from-under" the Soviets, even for a while, and gain much from the interchange, even though they, too, are carefully selected by their governments. Finally, while admitting that he had not recently been involved in the issue of Soviet Jews nor other issues involving dissidents and so on, on the whole he felt that quiet diplomacy would accomplish more than other tactics. He did acknowledge that quiet diplomacy worked better when there were indications that there was broad support behind it. So in fact he seemed to be saying that you need both approaches.

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cc: David Gordis
AJC Task Force on Soviet Jewry



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December 11, 1985

AMERICAN JEWISH

STATEMENT BY MIKHAIL GORBACHEV AT A DINNER TO HONOR THE
PARTICIPANTS IN THE NINTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
U.S.-USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL

Moscow. December 10. TASS.

"Ladies and gentlemen, comrades,

"I am pleased to welcome in the Kremlin the participants in the annual meeting of the U.S.-USSR Trade and Economic Council. We value the extensive activities in which the Council has been engaged for 10 years now in promoting contacts between American companies and Soviet foreign trade organizations. We value that fact particularly since, as you know, those were not easy years.

"I also would like to address words of welcome to United States Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Baldrige. We appreciate his presence here.

"The current meeting provides more confirmation that it is quite possible--and today, I would say, indispensable--to develop cooperation among people, nations and states having different social systems and different ideologies.

"Whether we like each other or not, we will have to live on this planet together. Hence our most important task--of which I spoke both in Geneva and afterwards--is to master the art of getting along together. And since this situation will be around for quite a while, we have to learn to live side by side in a civilized manner, as befits human beings.

"This brings me to the question of commercial and economic as well as scientific and technological ties between the Soviet Union and the United States, or, put in more general terms, between East and West. We view those ties above all from a political standpoint. First, this is because politics is the field where we tackle the main question of our relationship, namely, the question of war and peace. All other aspects of our relations, including trade and economic ties, should serve this overriding objective. Second, this is because our two countries are economic giants fully able to live and develop without any trade with each other whatsoever.

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"This, in effect, is the way things are right now. Look at the facts. In our trade exchanges the United States, the largest trading power in the world, ranks thirteenth, lagging far behind Finland, Belgium and Austria. We ourselves are in sixteenth place among the U.S.'s foreign trade partners. The volume of U.S. imports from the USSR is roughly equal to what your country imports from the Republic of the Ivory Coast.

"I regard this as no economic tragedy at all. Both of us will survive without each other, particularly since there is no lack of trading partners in the world today.

"But is it normal from a political standpoint? My answer is definitely and emphatically No. In our dangerous world we simply cannot afford to neglect--nor have we the right to do so--the stabilizing factors in relations concerning trade and economic and scientific and technological ties. If we are to have a genuinely stable and enduring relationship capable of ensuring a lasting peace, they should be based, among other things, on well-developed business relations.

"In this day and age each country and nation--the smallest as well as the biggest ones--regard independence as their highest value and spare no effort to defend it. And yet we are witnessing the growing interdependence of states. This is a natural consequence of the development of the world economy today and at the same time an important factor for international stability. Such interdependence is to be welcomed. It can become a powerful incentive in building stable, normal and, I would even venture to say, friendly relations.

"Dear guests,

"We are fully conscious of the complexity of the tasks facing all of us. I know that there are among you senior executives of companies that are prominent in American military business. Let me say frankly: We believe that the military business exerts a dangerous influence on politics. In fact, we are not alone in thinking so. The very concept of the military-industrial complex was not formulated by Marxists but by a conservative Republican, President Dwight D. Eisenhower of the United States, who warned the American people of the negative role that can be played by that complex.

"I am not saying this to reproach those of our guests who have contracts with the Pentagon. They have come to Moscow, and we welcome that fact, which, as I see it, testifies to the common sense of some representatives of military business. It would appear to me that some of them, as well as the U.S. business community as a whole, cannot remain indifferent to the economic and financial consequences for the country of the excessive military expenditures as well as the consequences of a one-sided development of the economy caused by militarization.

"As to the Soviet leadership, we are deeply convinced that cessation of the arms race serves the genuine vital interests of not only the Soviet Union but also the United States--if, of course, we are to address the crux of the matter rather than be guided only by the benefits of the moment accruing from any particular contract.

"Learning to live in peace--and this, I believe, is the pre-eminent interest common to both of us--means not only to refrain from making war. The difference

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between living in the genuine sense of that word and languishing in fear of a new increase in the danger of war is that the former implies the development of varied contacts and cooperation, including trade.

"Another reason why I believe that the development of trade and economic ties between our two countries is a political problem is that the main obstacles in their way are political rather than economic.

"The first such obstacle is that the Soviet Union does not enjoy the so-called most-favored-nation treatment. The term itself may be misleading, the impression being that it implies a particularly favorable attitude on the part of the United States to those granted such treatment. However, American businessmen know full well that this is not so. In practice the MFN treatment is no more than the absence of discrimination, primarily in customs tariffs. I have been told that about 120 countries enjoy the MFN treatment in the United States.

"The Soviet Union is being denied that treatment. And this, of course, creates obstacles in the way of our exporting many kinds of products to the United States, making it impossible for us to earn the money needed to purchase American products. After all, we cannot endlessly earn foreign currency, let us say, in Western Europe while spending it in the United States, for our trade partners will simply not appreciate that.

"The second problem is the obstacles we have to face in the United States regarding credits. I don't have to prove to you experienced businessmen that there can be no serious trade without credits.

"The third obstacle is the so-called 'export controls,' i.e. bans on the export of numerous products under the pretext that they can help in Soviet military production and thus prejudice U.S. security. There is a wealth of speculation on that score.

"I would like first of all to say this: The allegation that the Soviet Union's defense potential is based almost entirely on purchased Western technology and that it cannot develop without it is complete nonsense. Those who have come up with that allegation simply forget what kind of country they are dealing with; they forget--or want to make others forget--that the Soviet Union is a country of advanced science and technology, a country of outstanding scientists and engineers and highly skilled workers.

"Admittedly, like any other country, we rely--in military as well as civilian industries--on both our own and international scientific and technological achievements and international production know-how. That's life; it is inevitable, as demonstrated by the example of the United States itself. It is no secret, for instance, that a leading role in the development of nuclear weapons and missiles was played not by American science and scientists but by European, including Russian and Soviet, scientists.

"The real facts of today, as well as the lessons of history, should not be forgotten. To put things in true perspective, let me cite some of those facts here.

"It is a fact that the theoretical foundations of rocket technology were discovered and formulated by the outstanding Russian scientist Tsiolkovsky, that the basic theory of multistage rockets originated in our country and that the first

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experimental rockets and, finally, the first artificial Earth satellite were launched by our country, too, to say nothing of the first manned space flight.

"One can speak at great length about the contributions made by Russian and Soviet scientists--from Mendeleev to our time--to the development of modern chemistry. Let me just mention the fact that of the transuranic elements identified since 1950, a half were discovered by Soviet researchers.

"The major, and in many respects decisive, contribution of Soviet scientists to the development of the chain reaction theory, the light and radiowaves theory and the discovery of lasers is also beyond dispute. Modern aerodynamics, very low-temperature and very high-pressure technologies and almost all the technologies used in modern metallurgy would be inconceivable without what has been done by Soviet scientists.

"For all that, we are not saying that American corporations operate on technologies stolen from the Soviet Union.

"Just like you, we are interested in the development of scientific and technological ties and cooperation, which is quite normal and legitimate. I want all of you in the United States to understand that the Soviet Union will not become a market for obsolete products, that we are going to buy only those items that meet high world standards. If the United States persists in its current policy, we will produce what we need on our own or buy it elsewhere.

"Another obstacle to the development of our trade and economic ties is the policy of boycotts, embargoes, sanctions and broken trade contracts that has become a habit with the United States. You know what the results are: No particular harm has been done to the Soviet Union, while the commercial reputation of U.S. business and therefore its competitive position in the Soviet market have been seriously damaged. Our economic managers have lost confidence in the U.S. partners and therefore increasingly prefer other partners.

"This is what happened with large contracts for the delivery of pipe-laying equipment and equipment for the Novolipetsk Iron and Steel Integrated Works and an aluminum plant in Siberia, to say nothing of oil-and gas-drilling and prospecting equipment, where the U.S. share in our purchases has currently fallen to less than half a percentage point. And, being better informed that I am of the existing situation in the world markets, you are aware of the fact that competition there is bound to become even more intensive in the foreseeable future.

"I will be absolutely frank with you: So long as those obstacles exist, there will be no normal development of Soviet-U.S. trade and other economic ties on a large scale. This is regrettable, but we are not going to beg the United States for anything.

"However, should those political obstacles be removed, then I am sure broad prospects would open up before us. We are not competing with you in the world market or in the United States itself; in this respect you have more problems with your own allies than with us. But we can become partners--natural partners who, I can assure you, will be honest and reliable.

"Naturally, this will require work on both sides, including better knowledge of each other's markets and an improved mechanism for economic cooperation. I am aware that we are not without fault here either. The Soviet Government takes a fairly critical view of our foreign trade organizations, too. We believe that new forms of production and scientific and technological cooperation can be found.

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"We are now engaged in a major effort in that regard with the socialist countries. We view greater economic integration with them as a most important task. We also intend to expand trade and other forms of economic cooperation with Western Europe, Japan and the developing countries.

"We would not want our economic relations with the United States to be left out of that process--both for the political reasons that I have referred to and for economic reasons as well. We have great plans for our economic, scientific and technological development. And for that we would like to make the fullest possible use of the additional opportunities inherent in international cooperation, including those with the United States. One can contemplate major long-term projects and numerous medium-size and even small business deals which would be of interest both to giant corporations and to small and medium-size businesses. Provided that the situation is normalized and a sound political and contractual basis is established for the development of trade and economic relations, we shall have both things to buy from you and things to sell to you.

"We might suggest that U.S. companies and businesses participate in our programs of further developing the energy sector of our economy. We could also consider the possibility of giving American businesses and companies a share in our major effort to radically modernize machine-tool building and other machine-building industries. Should American companies find it worthwhile, they might, perhaps, become involved in the work which is under way in our country in the agroindustrial complex, in chemistry and petrochemistry and in the production of sets of machines and equipment to introduce intensive technologies in land cultivation and animal husbandry.

"All this, however, requires a display of political will. Economic relations have to be built on a long-term basis. Guarantees are needed that some political wind chill will not once again begin to erode business ties.

"And now let me go back to politics. This session of the U.S.-USSR Trade and Economic Council is taking place just three weeks after the Soviet-American meeting in Geneva. This fact makes the current session quite special. As I see it, its purpose is to analyze the potential for trade and economic cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States and to see what should be done in the best interests of both the Soviet and American peoples.

"The realization of the fact that the present state of Soviet-U.S. relations is unsatisfactory and dangerous was the main reason that brought President Reagan and myself to Geneva for our meeting and negotiations. I am sure that the President of the United States felt, as I did, that during those days the eyes of hundreds of millions of men and women, and even children, in our two countries and, in fact, in all other countries were focused on Geneva. And those eyes expressed both hope and anxiety.

"I can tell you frankly that feeling all that was not an easy experience. However, neither myself nor, I believe, the President thought it possible to shirk that enormous burden of human concerns and aspirations.

"Bearing in mind how difficult the road to Geneva was, it may be said that some success was achieved there. It is, however, only a first step. And every step that may follow will require still greater effort, a greater readiness to listen, a greater willingness and ability to understand and accommodate each other and, what is most important, a willingness to learn the most difficult art of reaching agreements on an equal and mutually acceptable basis, without which we will never be able to solve any serious problem.

(more)

"In other words, we have entered a particularly crucial period, when words, intentions and political statements should be translated into concrete decisions and action. What I have in mind, as you understand, are decisions and actions that would contribute to putting Soviet-American relations on an even keel and to a general improvement in the world political climate.

"Many U.S. businessmen are known for their well-developed enterprising spirit, a knack for innovation and an ability to identify untapped growth opportunities. I am convinced that today the best, genuinely promising possibilities of that kind are to be found not in pursuit of destruction and death but in the quest for peace and in a joint effort for the sake of equal and mutually beneficial cooperation among all countries and peoples. This is the essence of life, and the benefits to be derived from it are indisputable.

"Allow me to wish the U.S.-USSR Trade and Economic Council success in its useful activities.

"Thank you all for your attention."

Malcolm Baldrige then delivered a reply speech.

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**SOVIET JEWS: BENEFICIARIES OR VICTIMS OF IMPROVING
SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS?**

by David A. Harris, Deputy Director

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It is a widely held view that the fate of Soviet Jewry is, to a considerable degree, linked to the state of Soviet-American bilateral relations. While other factors may play a significant role, specifically Soviet domestic considerations -- ideological, economic, national (ethnic) -- and, to a potentially very important extent, the Kremlin's Middle East policy, it has always been in the realm of the superpower relationship that our greatest hopes for the redemption of hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews seeking to emigrate to Israel and to reunite with their families have rested.

If, indeed, Jewish emigration is linked to the ebb and flow of Soviet-American relations, this certainly helps explain the precipitous decline in the average monthly rate of departures from more than 4,000 in 1979 to less than 100 in 1985. Relations plummeted for reasons that are by now well-known: Soviet proxy expansion in Africa and elsewhere in the Third World, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, repression in Poland, and, from the Soviet viewpoint, the Senate refusal to ratify the SALT-II Treaty, the granting of most-favored-nation trade status to China but not to the U.S.S.R., the imposition of sanctions, the anti-Soviet rhetoric of President Reagan, etc. Were Soviet Jews made hostages to that superpower relationship, rendered pawns in a ruthless Soviet geopolitical strategy? A very good case can certainly be made for it.

Does it necessarily follow, however, that in a period of ascending, or improving bilateral ties the condition of Soviet Jewry will ease and the rate of emigration increase? It is a difficult question to answer, but one we can ill afford to ignore.

What was all but missing in the early 80's was a proper framework for regular high-level dialogue between Washington and Moscow. Meetings between the American secretary of state and Soviet foreign minister were held infrequently and against a backdrop of mutual suspicion and distrust. Today, though, one of the critical ingredients in any likely formula for success, namely, a process for regular, high-level meetings, is in place. This will include, of course, at least two additional summits and, of necessity, dozens of other meetings of officials both to plan the summits themselves and to focus on the various regional, economic, bilateral, in addition to ongoing strategic, issues facing our two countries. Such dialogue is a necessary, though insufficient, condition for resolution of the Soviet Jewry problem; it must, at the very least, be seen as a significant step forward, hence an important opportunity for us all.

At the recently concluded Summit in Geneva, President Reagan did address at considerable length Soviet human rights issues, including, specifically, emigration, in his one-on-one meetings with General Secretary Gorbachev, doing so in a low-keyed manner to convey to the Soviets a sense of the seriousness of purpose of the American position. And, Secretary of State Shultz has also lost no opportunity to convey to his Soviet counterpart the depth and breadth of American feeling, across religious, racial and political lines, on the subject of Soviet Jewry. His personal commitment to this issue, is, like President Reagan's, unquestionable. In this respect, there is much to be proud of, for it clearly demonstrates how far we have come in the last 40 years since a time when our government showed considerably less concern for the fate of endangered Jews.

But what now? The dialogue has begun, the statements have been made and the concern expressed, and the Soviets have been told that a significant improvement in "atmospherics" would ensue from a more liberal emigration policy, beginning with the release of Prisoners of Conscience and former POCs and long-term refuseniks. The American Jewish community has hinted rather unambiguously that it would be prepared to endorse flexibility in the interpretation of existing American trade laws were the Soviets to be forthcoming. Moscow has surely not missed these signals, yet has chosen to ignore them, at least for now. Is the Kremlin hoping that, by waiting, it will be able to extract an ever higher price from the U.S.? Is the Gorbachev regime not yet in a position to act decisively on such a difficult, and reportedly controversial, issue among Soviet decision-making factions in the leadership? Does it seriously believe its ludicrous assertions that Soviet Jews are so well off that, by deduction, they could not possibly want to leave?

Whatever the cause of Moscow's intractability on the emigration question, the momentum of improved relations in other areas is beginning to build. A 400-person U.S. business delegation has just visited Moscow, cultural and consular exchange agreements are being finalized, U.S. banks are showing interest in extending loans to a low-risk debtor nation that pays back on time, and, doubtless, this process will continue to grow in the current atmosphere. If the Kremlin understands that it can reach these agreements without being compelled to make a major gesture on Soviet Jewry, why, from its viewpoint, should it? And if the Kremlin believes that, as in the case of the U.S. farm lobby which brought about a lifting of the grain embargo in early 1981 without there being any change in the Afghan situation (the reason for which President Carter first imposed the embargo) and in 1983 led the successful drive for a long-term grain agreement with the U.S.S.R. without any political conditions attached, why should the Soviets not let American interest groups pursue their own self-interest? At the same time, the Kremlin may be counting on the notoriously short memory of the American public to increase domestic pressures here for further trade, commerce and exchanges. Why then yield in any but the smallest concessionary way

(i.e., the release of a refusenik every now and then, perhaps) on the Soviet Jewry issue? In fact, those who hoped that in the weeks prior to the Summit the Kremlin would at least make a gesture or two on Soviet Jewry were sorely disappointed. The few moves made were with respect to the courageous Yelena Bonner, wife of Nobel Laureate Andrei Sakharov, to one-third of the divided bi-national marriage cases group, and to the release of a dissident and her family. In sum, nothing positive on the Soviet Jewry front happened, as important as these other cases are.

Will the Soviet Jewry movement soon be seen as an obstacle to improving relations not just for the Soviets but also for increasing numbers of Americans seeking to engage in trade, investment, academic and cultural exchange, and the like? Does the Soviet Jewry movement simply accept the assurances of even the most sincere political leaders that Soviet Jewry will necessarily be a beneficiary of improved bilateral ties -- that once relations are on a firmer footing it will somehow become easier to influence Kremlin thinking on this subject? Does the Soviet Jewry movement content itself with continuing to create optimistic scenarios and ever new target dates -- the 1984 presidential elections, Gorbachev's need to "consolidate" power, the Geneva Summit meeting, the February 1986 Soviet Communist Party Congress, and so on -- on which to pin its hopes for a reversal of the current plight?

These questions have no easy answers but they require our earnest consideration. We may want to avoid confrontation, or a slugging match with other constituencies in the U.S., but we must establish for ourselves a set of appropriate responses both for the possibility of improving and deteriorating conditions for Soviet Jews and act accordingly. Just as we must be prepared to demonstrate flexibility in response to an improvement in the emigration picture, so must we also be willing to consider stepping up the pressure on both Soviet and American authorities if no serious progress occurs in the coming months leading to the next Summit meeting in June, lest the rush of events sweep by us. The precise nature of the various possible responses should be a matter of continuing review by the organized Jewish community and its friends.

If the Soviets feel they can lull us into a stupor -- cause us to tire of the struggle, become frustrated at our inability to change things, exhaust our hitherto endless reserve of creative ideas to respond, or if they believe that they can divorce the issue from the current framework of Soviet-American relations, they must be proven wrong. Too much hangs in the balance.

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J.C. 12/27/85

Soviet-Jewish exodus denied

By the Foreign Editor

Victor Louis, the Soviet journalist who is known to be close to Kremlin sources, has denounced Western "speculation" about a projected exodus of Soviet Jews to Israel.

He has also criticised Mr Edgar Bronfman, the president of the World Jewish Congress, for his statements about a deal with the Soviet Government.

In a telephone conversation from Moscow this week, Mr Louis said: "Mr Bronfman is making a lot of publicity for himself.

"He claims that there has been an agreement with the Soviet Union about Russian Jews, but nothing has taken place. There is no change, and we have not made any promises."

In an earlier interview with the "Jewish Chronicle," Mr Bronfman said that an agreement had been reached with Soviet officials but, while world Jewry had kept its part of the bargain, the Russians had not kept theirs.

Commenting on this, Mr Louis said: "The trouble is that any Jewish leader who comes to Moscow has to say he has signed an agreement on behalf of Israel.

"Possibly I am wrong, but there is no indication in Moscow of any new development. Honestly! There is just a lot of wishful thinking."

People in Moscow were preoccupied with other changes that were taking place. Soviet Jews were discussing the retirement of Mr Venyamin Emmanuelovich Dymshits, a Deputy Prime Minister and the only Jew in the top Soviet leadership.

However, the retirement was because of Mr Dymshits' age — he is 76 — and there was no question of any anti-Jewish campaign, Mr Louis insisted.

Philip Gillon cables from Jerusalem: Israeli television viewers were astonished last Friday night to see Rabbi Adolf Shayevich, of the Moscow Synagogue in Arkhipova St, interviewed in Paris by Israel Television's correspondent.

He was asked, in a routine manner, about the possibilities

of Soviet Jews coming on aliya to Israel. Rabbi Shayevich answered firmly, and in perfect Hebrew, that every Jew who wanted to emigrate to Israel would be able to do so.

When would this be? he was asked. The rabbi urged Jews everywhere to be patient, pointing out that Jews had waited 2,000 years for a state.

Great interest has been generated in Israel by reports that El Al, Israel's national airline, may soon be allowed to re-establish direct air links with three Eastern bloc states.

In Newton, Massachusetts, Mrs Yelena Bonner, 62, the Jewish-born wife of the Soviet dissident, Dr Andrei Sakharov, visited a synagogue for the first time in her life and expressed the hope that Soviet Jews would be allowed to join their families abroad.

A Jewish Chronicle reporter writes: Mr Arieh Handler, the chairman of the National Council for Soviet Jewry, said that none of the rumours appearing in the British press about a possible exodus of Soviet Jews was based on tangible facts.