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Box 74, Folder 9, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 1988-1989.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date December 20, 1988
to See Below
from David Harris
subject SOVIET JEWRY UPDATE

Here is the latest information we have been able to obtain:

(1) The effort to reach a final agreement to end the two-year-long Vienna Review Conference of the Helsinki Final Act is gaining momentum. The thorny last-minute problem introduced by the French apparently has been resolved. What is left are the issues of the remaining political prisoners and long-term refuseniks. The question of psychiatric abuse reportedly has been addressed by the establishment of Soviet-American channels to deal with the issue. As far as the prisoners are concerned, the approximate numbers are: three prisoners sentenced under the (four) political articles; 30 convicted under trumped up charges of treason, hooliganism, speculation, etc; and 50 imprisoned on trumped up charges who the Soviets claim they cannot identify or locate. The refusenik list has also been shortened with the lifting of secrecy restrictions on 40 long-term refuseniks, and indications are that more such moves are to follow. Clearly, the Soviets are anxious to have a final agreement and a human rights conference in Moscow in 1991.

(2) Re the controversy over the refugee status for Soviet Jews, one of the contentious issues deals with the application of the 1980 refugee definition. Though the wording is "well-founded fear of persecution...", INS appears to be emphasizing "persecution" rather than "fear of persecution." To the interviewing INS officer, some Soviet Jews appear well-educated, well-dressed, reasonably well-off, and, in certain cases, affiliated with the Communist Party. Especially to those INS and other officials who lack experience in the Soviet Union, these attributes run counter to the refugee notion. Also, some in INS appear to make a distinction between discrimination and persecution, suggesting that the former need not prove the latter. That is, they accept that Soviet Jews have suffered discrimination in seeking an education or employment, but do not conclude that this necessarily suggests persecution.

(3) Parole does solve the problem of entry for those otherwise stranded by the denial of refugee status, but, in the case of Soviet Jews, it may serve to undermine the integrity of the refugee program, concluded one sympathetic State Department official.

(4) As Soviet (and Soviet Jewish) tourism to this country swells, we should expect more cases of requests for political asylum, many of which are likely to be granted. An estimated 2,500 U.S. tourist visas are being issued monthly by the U.S. in Moscow. As many as 60% of the recipients are Jews. In some cases, couples are being allowed to travel, a far cry from earlier Soviet practices.

(5) A longer term problem with the surge in tourism is that those Soviet Jews who return to the USSR and later apply for emigration may find it more difficult to be eligible for U.S. refugee status. This issue earlier surfaced in the case of some Iranian Jews who had travelled back and forth to Iran before applying for U.S. admission.

(6) Down the road, there may well be still more competition for the U.S. refugee slots. For example, an undetermined but substantial part of the roughly 800,000 Pentacostalists in the USSR may seek to leave. Also, it is anticipated that the Soviets may soon issue new exit (i.e. emigration) regulations that would make the process easier. Either no invitations from abroad would be necessary to apply for emigration, or, at the very least, the family definition would be broadened. In either case, the pool of potential applicants would then be considerable, drawn, by the way, not only from Jews, Armenians and Pentacostalists (I leave Germans aside as they are destined for the Federal Republic), but also from Lithuanians, Latvians, Ukrainians, etc.

(7) No one in the State Department yet appears to be talking about the Israel option for Soviet Jews, but if pressure continues to grow on refugee numbers and dollars, it is certainly possible that the issue of why Soviet Jews do not go to Israel will surface with greater regularity, especially after George Shultz leaves office. Shultz has been so closely identified with the freedom of choice issue that no one in the Department would raise it seriously at this point. Come the next Administration (and the possibility of still greater emigration numbers from the USSR), who knows?

(8) As expected (and reported on in previous memos), the Administration has formally proposed the creation of a new immigration category, namely, for those of special interest to the U.S. Government. Over time, it likely would substitute for the parole authority invested in the Attorney General. The advantage would be speedier processing and normalization of status upon arrival in the U.S. If this new status is approved

by Congress, it probably will not affect Soviet Jews in substantial numbers in the beginning, but could as time passes. If conditions continue to improve in the USSR, it will be harder for an applicant to successfully demonstrate "a well-founded fear of persecution..." Accordingly, this category now will provide a way of maintaining the U.S. doors open, while limiting the U.S. financial obligation and leaving numbers available for refugees in greater need elsewhere in the world.

In the meantime, by transferring as many as 3,000 numbers from the Vietnamese Orderly Departure Program, which has not produced the outflow expected, and by frontloading some Soviet refugee numbers from the FY89 third and fourth quarters, the Government is hoping to speed up the processing and reduce the backlog. Also, the allocation by the Attorney General of up to 2,000 parole numbers per month will help make a dent, though it should be remembered that parole status means no federal financial assistance and only temporary status upon arrival in the U.S.

INS has sent one officer to Moscow to resume processing after a few weeks' gap, and will begin normal processing with at least one additional officer in January. The operational problems facing INS are twofold: to find officers who speak Russian, and to stay below the ceiling on the number of U.S. diplomatic personnel permitted in the USSR by the Soviets.

(9) On a separate note, it is time, I am being told again and again, for the American Jewish community to begin thinking seriously about its position on the Jackson-Vanik and Stevenson Amendments. While there is nothing imminent, and the Administration probably will not move unilaterally, there is a need for the Jewish community to weigh policy options and be prepared for the possible surfacing of these issues in the relatively near future. (I have separately raised this matter with Shoshana Cardin, Chair of the NCSJ, and she agrees that it is a question of some immediacy.)

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Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

June 16, 1989

The Honorable Andre Parastaev
USSR Embassy
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr.. Parastaev,

It was my pleasure to speak with you again. You may recall that we met during the presentation of the American Jewish World Service's financial support for the victims of the Soviet Armenian earthquake.

My purpose in writing to you now is to ask for your assistance, if possible, in obtaining airline tickets for two Soviet citizens who are eager to come to the United States for the wedding of children of their only living relatives.

The Soviet citizens are Ms. Minna Mogilevkina, and Mr. Yefim Mogilevkin. Their address (which I hope I get right) is:

66-86 Ulitsa Krasnykh Pechatnikov, Apartment 39

Kalinin Region

Vishniy - Volochek. Telephone: 138-89

They are eager to come to the United States around August 26, 1989, in order to join the wedding of their relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Padua of Columbus, Ohio, whose children are marrying shortly after that time. They would return to the Soviet Union shortly after the wedding on September 23.

The Mogilevkins have applied in Leningrad several times for Aeroflot tickets, and have been told that the airline is booked up until April 1990. They are eager to fly on Aeroflot, but would be prepared to purchase tickets (by rubles) on Pan Am, Czech airlines, Norwegian, or others that could bring them to the States in time for the wedding.

They would wish to fly to Columbus, Ohio, from the USSR, and fly home from New York, via Cincinnati, Ohio.

I would not trouble you with this request, Mr. Parastaev, if I did not feel it is an important humanitarian request. I do appreciate personally your giving this your time and attention.

Sincerely yours,



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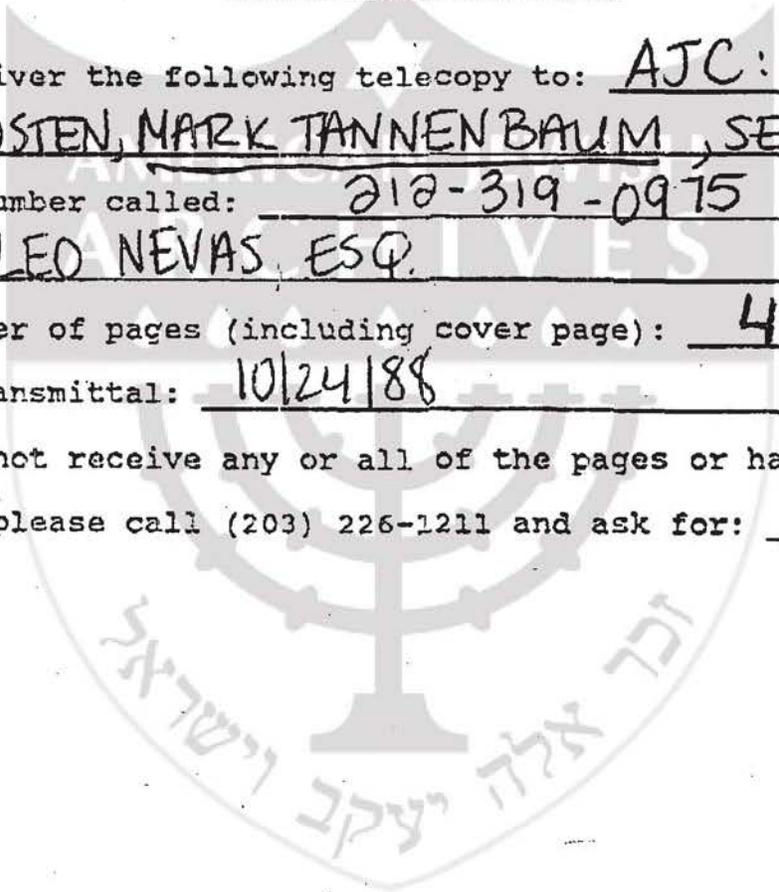
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**American Participants
in Meeting Between
UNA-USA and the Soviet UN Association
Working Group on the United Nations**

October 24 - October 26, 1988

New York City

Chairman:

Richard N. Gardner

Professor of Law and International Organization
Columbia University Law School
Former Deputy Assistant Secretary
for International Organization Affairs and
Ambassador to Italy Under President Carter

Toby Trister Gati
Vice President for Policy Studies
United Nations Association of the United States of America

***Congressman Bill Green**
US House of Representatives (R-~~NY~~)
Member, Committee on Appropriations
Member, Subcommittee on District of Columbia
Member, Subcommittee on HUD-Independent Agencies

Samuel W. Lewis
President, US Institute for Peace
Former Assistant Secretary of State for
International Organization Affairs
Former Ambassador to Israel and Special Assistant
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Nathan A. Pelcovits
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International Studies, Johns Hopkins University
Former Director of UN Planning, Department of State
Former Chief Officer on Peacekeeping, Department of State

David Popper
President
American Academy of Diplomacy
Former Ambassador to Cyprus and Chile
Former Assistant Secretary of State
for International Organization Affairs

Max Fing

**Soviet Participants
in Meeting Between
UNA-USA and the Soviet UN Association
Working Group on the United Nations**

October 24 - 26, 1988

New York City

Chairman:

Vladimir Shustov

Director

**Research Coordination Center
Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Former Deputy Permanent Representative
Soviet Mission to the United Nations**

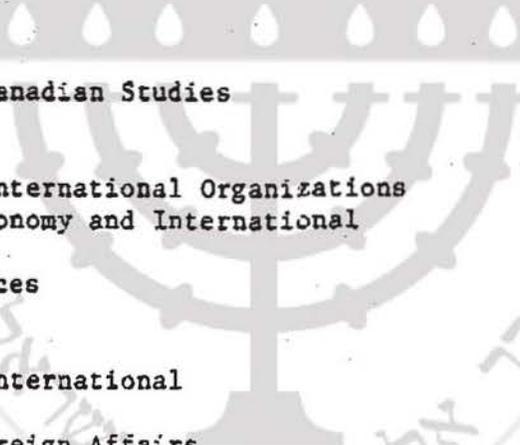
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Stanley Heginbotham
 Deputy Director
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Enid Schoettle
 Director
 International Affairs
 Ford Foundation

Karel Vosskuhler
 Program Officer
 International Affairs
 Ford Foundation

Rapporteur:

Richard Falkenrath

* will attend part of the meeting

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date December 9, 1988
to Ira Silverman
from David Harris
subject MEETING WITH SOVIET RELIGIOUS DELEGATION

Yesterday I participated, together with a small group of American Jewish, Lutheran and Catholic representatives, in a meeting with an 11-member Soviet religious delegation that came to Washington after attending a conference in Philadelphia of Soviet and American "emerging leaders." (In fact, I unexpectedly ended up being more than a participant. As there was no official interpreter, together with two of the Soviets, I also served in that role.)

The delegation included Nikolai Mukhin, head of the International Department of the Council on Religious Affairs; Sergei Kuznetsov, in charge of the Council's Armenian and Catholic Departments; Bishop (Archimandrite) Alexi, dean at the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra in Moscow; Vera Kadayeva, editor of the Bratsky Vestnik Magazine at the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists; Nikolai Devyatkin, pastor of a Baptist church in Archangelsk; and Vladimir Plise, cantor at the Moscow Choral Synagogue.

The tone was friendly and frank, the focus on recent changes in Soviet attitudes towards religion. The common theme was that the Kremlin had come to understand the importance of spirituality to society. Accordingly, the authorities, who had never placed much importance on the individual in society, focusing instead on the group, were beginning to accept religion's emphasis on the individual. Would the trend continue? All were persuaded that perestroika was here to stay, and that spirituality and economic and social progress could be mutually nurturing.

Cantor Plise offered extensive comments on the Jewish community:

(1) He does not believe the potential pool of Jewish emigrants exceeds from "a few thousand to a few tens of thousands," thus he thinks that the focus of Jewish activities must be on the development of religious and cultural life within the USSR.

(2) In fact, the first signs of communal development are occurring. He cited the kosher restaurant in Moscow and the current discussions with Hasidic groups in the West about the restoration of Jewish cemeteries. Hundreds of Hasidic Jews from

the West have been visiting the cemeteries, located in Moldavia, Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic states. More likely would come if kosher facilities were available, thus consideration is being given in this regard.

(3) He sees his principal Western contact as Rabbi Arthur Schneier of New York. Cantor Plise noted that in the past month both Rabbi Schneier and Ralph Goldman, former executive vice-president of the JDC and acting in its name, had visited numerous Soviet cities to help determine the communal needs of the Jewish community.

(4) Just a week ago, a group of Orthodox cantors from the U.S. and Canada visited Moscow and performed concerts both in the synagogue and at a leading pedagogical institute.

(5) Cantor Plise noted that the Jewish community now has the right to publish material, but is hampered by a lack of funds and technical facilities. Also, because of the absence of many Jewish scholars in the USSR, there is the additional task of seeking the translation of foreign works.

(6) The teaching of Hebrew is now permitted, he asserted. "All that's left to determine is how and where."

(7) He noted the formation of the Jewish Cultural Association in Moscow and predicted that similar groups would soon be established in other Soviet cities.

(8) Cantor Plise stressed that the political and social situation has been changing so rapidly that he and others are still trying to fathom the new developments and their implications for the development of Jewish life.

In response to a question about Pamyat, Cantor Plise shrewdly responded: "I have my own very strong personal feelings on the subject, but that's obvious because I am a Jew. Perhaps some of my colleagues would like to respond." In fact, Mr. Kuznetsov took up the invitation. He condemned the organization and asserted that its support was severely limited. Still, he noted, "anti-Semitism is an unfortunate weak point of democracy. It's a sad fact, but what can we do? Shall we try to ban the group? No, that would be wrong in a democracy. Rather, let's expose them."



cc: Shula Bahat
David Geller
Dan Kamin

Richard Maass
Gary Rubin
Jim Rudin

Marc Tanenbaum
Mort Yarmon



National Conference on Soviet Jewry

DATE: August 19, 1988

TO: Executive Committee
Board of Governors
Federations/CRCs
Member Agencies

FROM: Myrna Shinbaum, National Director

Summer is usually a quiet time, but you will see from the enclosed material that the NCSJ has been actively engaged in promoting the cause of Soviet Jewry.

Mark Levin's memo describes several Congressional initiatives which required NCSJ to take the lead and coordinate with communities and national agencies. Also, Mark attended the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta and the Republican National Convention in New Orleans. He testified before the RNC Platform Committee a week before the convention.

Barbara Gaffin participated in the National Conference on State Legislatures in Reno, Nevada (see enclosed memo). A report on her appearance before the Sister Cities International Conference in Lexington, KY, will be sent shortly.

Robin Saipé coordinated a visit to Washington for former long-term refusenik Lev Shapiro and arranged several meetings for Anna Rosnovsky, sister of Leningrad activist Elena Keis-Kuna.

Various government and non-government groups traveling to the USSR this summer were briefed by the Washington staff and received background materials in advance of their departure.

All this, I might add, was done amid packing for their move into new offices, which should be completed by mid-September.

We hope you have had a good summer, and we look forward to keeping you updated on developments as they occur.

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Washington Office: 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 • (202) 265-8114



National Conference on Soviet Jewry

DATE: August 16, 1988

TO: Board of Governors
Federations, CRC's
National Agencies

FROM: Mark Levin, Washington Representative

RE: Update on McClure Amendment/Refugee Funds

Thanks to all of your efforts over the past month we gained two important legislative victories: the McClure Amendment was defeated for a third time, and funds for Soviet refugees coming to the U.S. were reinstated.

McClure Amendment - You may recall that the original McClure Amendment, attached to the Defense Authorization Act, was killed in conference. The senator reintroduced a modified version of the amendment to the Treasury Appropriation Bill which was subsequently defeated on the Senate floor on a procedural vote. On August 3rd, Sen. McClure attempted to attach the amendment to the Trade Bill, but a 67-28 vote to table the amendment essentially ended prospects for its passage.

Passage of the McClure Amendment, which links compliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act with most-favored-nation (MFN) status, would have eroded the traditional and useful link between the right to leave one's country, and the recognized use of trade ties to our nation.

A copy of the vote and part of the debate are attached for your use. Please write your senators to thank them if they voted to table Sen. McClure's amendment.

Refugee Funds for Soviet Emigres - Members of Congress, the NCSJ, and other Jewish organization, particularly the Council of Jewish Federations and HIAS, have worked together in recent weeks to reverse the State Department decision to suspend, until October 1, the issuance of refugee visas to Soviet citizens with permission to emigrate to the U.S. On August 11th, both the House and Senate approved a Dire Emergency Supplemental Appropriations which included \$24 million for the U.S. Emergency Migration and Refugee Assistance Fund, \$6 million of which is earmarked for immediate assistance to refugees from the USSR and Eastern Europe. In the House, the amendment to the appropriations bill was offered by Rep. David Obey (D-WI), and in the Senate, provision for the necessary funds was agreed to in conference at the urging of Senators Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Daniel Inouye (D-HI). We are currently awaiting the President's signature.

On a separate matter, Sen. David Durenberger (R-MN) introduced an amendment to the Trade Bill on August 3rd to condition repeal of the prohibition on the importation of furskins from the USSR on a certification by the President regarding freedom of emigration from the Soviet Union.

The NCSJ opposed the Durenberger Amendment, which was tabled by a vote of 64-32, because it was the wrong signal to send to the Soviets at this time.

If you have any questions about any of these issues, please call me or Barbara Gaffin in the NCSJ Washington office.

Thank you again for all your help.

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To run the risk of harming a policy that has worked well, and to say it is because we love worldwide human liberties, but we are only going to apply it this country, I think is a misappropriation of our idealism.

Mr. McCLURE. Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 1 minute.

Mr. McCLURE. In that minute, it is difficult to respond, but let me say, first, that this is not just aimed at the Soviet Union. This is aimed at every country which signed the Helsinki accords.

And that is why it is tied to the Helsinki accords.

Let me close simply by saying it is argued that this does not do everything, so let us do nothing. It is argued that we really care but at the same time it is said that we really care we must do nothing to offend the Soviets. How empty is our caring if indeed it is tied with a position that says we can do nothing?

The Senate ought to reject the motion to table. I hope the managers of the bill will not make it. I urge the adoption of the amendment.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from Oregon (Mr. Packwood) 2 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas has 9 minutes.

The Senator from Oregon is recognized for 2 minutes.

Mr. PACKWOOD. I thank the Chair and the Senator from Texas.

Let me read the letter just handed to me dated today.

DEAR SENATOR PACKWOOD: We are writing to you to express our concern regarding Senator McClure's attempts to link the granting of investment promotion (MFN) status with compliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act.

While there is no doubt that compliance with the Helsinki Final Act is a major objective of Soviet Jewry activists, we believe that expanding the requirements for MFN would erode the traditional and useful link between the right to leave one's country, which is a most basic and fundamental human right, and the recognized use of trade ties to our nation, including the granting of MFN status.

This link, which is stipulated in the Jackson-Vanik Amendment to the Trade Act of 1974, has served as a significant avenue for dealing with the Soviets on the issue of the right to leave one's country. Senator McClure's action, while well-intentioned, would alter the Jackson-Vanik Amendment by expanding the requirements needed for achieving MFN.

We consider this matter to be extremely important with potentially serious consequences for the Soviet Jewry movement. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Washington office of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, at 2000 8114.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Morris B. Abram, Chairman, National Conference on Soviet Jewry; Theodore Ellenoff, President, American Jewish Committee; Robert Lifton, President, American Jewish Congress; Burton F.

Levinson, National Chairman, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith; Seymour Reich, President, B'nai B'rith International; Hyla Lipsky, President, B'nai B'rith Women; Mendell L. Berman, President, Council of Jewish Federations; Ruth Popkin, President, Hadassah; Lenore Feldman, President, National Council of Jewish Women; Rabbi Alexander Schindler, President, Union of American Hebrew Congregations; and Milton S. Shapiro, President, Zionist Organization of America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. President, that message carries great significance because here we are talking about the people most sensitive to the concern and they are asking that this amendment be defeated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho has utilized his full time.

The Senator from Texas has 64 minutes remaining.

Mr. BENTSEN. I see no further requests on my side.

Mr. President, I will move to table and the Senator from Oregon joins with me in that. I move to table the amendment and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion of the Senator from Texas to lay on the table the amendment of the Senator from Idaho. On this question, the yeas and nays have been ordered and the clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CRANSTON. I announce that the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. Bumpers) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. Stennis) are necessarily absent.

I also announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. Biden) is absent because of illness.

Mr. SIMPSON. I announce that the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. Cochran) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. Thurmond) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. Thurmond) would vote "Nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 28, as follows:

(Rollcall Vote No. 288 Leg.)

YEAS—67

Adams	Chafee	Evans
Baucus	Chiles	Exon
Bentsen	Cohen	Ford
Bingaman	Conrad	Fowler
Bond	Cranston	Glenn
Boren	Danforth	Gore
Bradley	Daschle	Graham
Breaux	Dixon	Gramm
Burdick	Dodd	Harkin
Byrd	Doty	Hatch

Hellm
Heinz
Hollings
Inouye
Johnston
Kassebaum
Kasten
Kennedy
Kerry
Lautenberg
Leahy
Levin
Matsunaga

McConnell
Metzenbaum
Mikulski
Mitchell
Moynihan
Nunn
Packwood
Pell
Proxmire
Fryor
Reid
Riegle
Rockefeller

Roth
Sanford
Sarbanes
Sasser
Shelby
Simon
Simpson
Stafford
Weicker
Wilson
Wirth

NAYS—28

Armstrong
BochWRS
D'Amato
DeConcini
Domenici
Durenberger
Garn
Grassley
Hatch
Hecht

Helms
Humphrey
Karnes
Lugar
McCain
McClure
Melcher
Murkowski
Nickles
Prosser

Quayle
Rudman
Specter
Stevens
Symms
Trible
Wallop
Warner

NOT VOTING—5

Biden
Bumpers

Cochran
Stennis

Thurmond



National Conference on Soviet Jewry

DATE: August 16, 1988

TO: Board of Governors
Federations, CRC's
Member Agencies

FROM: Barbara Gaffin, Congressional Liaison

RE: State Legislatures Conference, 1988

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) convened this year in Reno, Nevada, July 25-29th. In preparation for the conference, I contacted the president of the National Association of Jewish Legislators (NAJL), Sen. Art Berman from Chicago, who invited me to speak again this year. Our Washington office also sent out a mailing to federations and CRCs, requesting the names of their state legislators who would be attending the conference and have indicated an interest in Soviet Jewry.

I found the NAJL meetings to be quite useful. It was an excellent opportunity to make contacts and to learn what many of the legislators are doing on behalf of Soviet Jewry. For example, Colorado State Senator Dennis Gallagher, a non-Jew who is chairman of Colorado's Interfaith Committee for Soviet Jewry, and Rep. Jerry Kopel, Assistant Minority Leader of Colorado's House of Representatives, told me that they are particularly anxious to pursue a more aggressive role in their state regarding Soviet Jewry. I also learned that State Rep. Pauline Eisenstadt, Majority Caucus Chairwoman of New Mexico's House of Representatives, was responsible for introducing to the NCSL's Law and Justice Committee a resolution supporting human rights and the rights of Soviet Jews to emigrate. Rep. Sheila Arnold of Wyoming, whose name was another example of a non-Jew who is more than willing to do what she can for our issue. I have since forwarded to her several refuseniks for her to adopt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It seems clear that there is enormous potential to involve state and local officials in the Soviet Jewry movement in a more aggressive fashion than has been done in the past. While a number of states (California, Colorado, Connecticut, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Ohio, to be specific) have organized "State Officials for Soviet Jews" groups, some of these operate on an ad hoc basis only, often due to a lack of time, money and/or resources. A few states, such as Maryland and Pennsylvania, actively engage their legislators, albeit not in the context of a separate or affiliated organization.

Many state legislators are receptive to the idea of becoming involved in the fight to gain freedom for Soviet Jews. Some will simply need to be asked, others will need to be educated as to how they can indeed help this cause. The federation/CRC agency affiliate can be helpful by:

- 1) Contacting legislators;
- 2) Providing them with current information about the situation, as well as activities which the community has undertaken;

- over -

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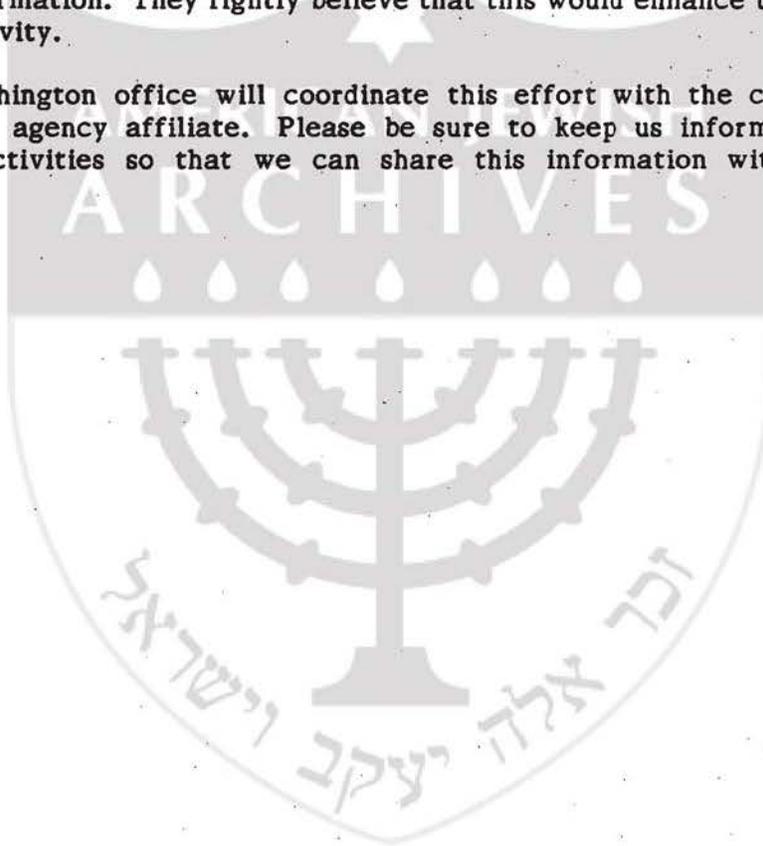


3) Explaining how they can show support. Only rarely will this mean legislatively. State officials can adopt refuseniks (by writing to a family and to Soviet officials on the family's behalf); serve as role models for local business, religious, academic, or other community leaders to solicit their support; and take advantage of media interviews or other such opportunities to raise public awareness.

4) Inviting state officials to participate in Soviet Jewry programs, meet former refuseniks, or visit the USSR with members of the Jewish community.

The NCSJ will be establishing a national "State and Local Officials" committee which will serve to ensure that interested state officials are kept appraised of developments in the USSR and of activities here in this country by their colleagues in other states/cities. Several state legislators have requested receiving a newsletter which would contain such information. They rightly believe that this would enhance their effectiveness in promoting activity.

The NCSJ's Washington office will coordinate this effort with the cooperation of the federations/CRC agency affiliate. Please be sure to keep us informed regarding any of the above activities so that we can share this information with legislators and communities.





National Conference on Soviet Jewry

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE

Vol. II, No. 15

Aug. 5, 1988

FORMER REFUSENIK LEV SHAPIRO TO VISIT WASHINGTON

Former long-term refusenik Lev Shapiro will arrive in Washington from Israel next week to meet with Members of Congress and their staff. Refused since 1977, Lev appeared in June 1970 as a witness at the first Leningrad trial on behalf of the defendants who attempted to steal an airplane and fly to Israel, in desperation after having been denied permission to emigrate. While in the USSR, the Shapiros maintained a traditional Jewish home despite the lack of religious and cultural material available to them.

Lev and his family received permission to emigrate to Israel in March 1988.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAUCUS HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE ON ANTI-SEMITIC GROUPS IN THE USSR

The Congressional Human Rights Caucus, chaired by Reps. Tom Lantos (D-CA) and John Edward Porter (R-IL), will hold a press conference to express concern about registered organizations in the Soviet Union which are clearly anti-Semitic. Last month, Reps. Porter, Lantos, Jack Buechner (R-MO), and Jim Scheuer (D-NY) circulated a "dear colleague" on this matter, and the press conference is a follow-up to that effort. The National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ), along with other Jewish organizations, former refusenik Lev Shapiro, and Members of Congress, including the initiators of the "dear colleague," will participate in the press conference, which will be held on Aug. 9, 10:30 am on the East steps of the Capitol.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, NCSJ URGE REINSTATEMENT OF REFUGEE FUNDS FOR SOVIET EMIGRES

Members of Congress, the NCSJ and other Jewish organizations have expressed concern about the recent decision of the State Department to suspend until Oct. 1 the issuance of refugee visas to Soviet citizens seeking to emigrate to the U.S.

In the Senate, Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), Bob Kasten (R-WI), Arlen Specter (R-PA), and Daniel Inouye (D-HI) along with nearly 50 of their colleagues, sent a letter to President Reagan urging that funds be set aside to cover the costs for refugees to come to the United States.

The House voted to provide a supplemental appropriations of \$24 million for the US Emergency Migration and Refugee Assistance Fund, \$6 million of which to be

Prepared by the Washington Office of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

Morris Abram
Chairman

Jerry Goodman
Executive Director

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earmarked for assistance to refugees from the USSR. The amendment to the Dire-
Emergency Supplemental bill was offered by Rep. David Obey (D-WI). Action is pend-
ing in the Senate.

Other efforts in the House include letters to President Reagan from Tom Luker (R-OH)
Sid Yates (D-IL), Jack Kemp (R-NY), John Edward Porter (R-IL), and 16 of their
colleagues; and to Secretary of State George Shultz from Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and
the other members of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees & International Law.

A delegation of the NCSJ and its member agencies met with Secretary Shultz last
week to discuss the possibility of reinstating funds for Soviet emigres.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TRAVEL TO THE SOVIET UNION

Senators Phil Gramm (R-TX), Richard Shelby (D-AL), and Steve Symms (R-ID), traveled
to the Soviet Union last month, met with refuseniks and discussed the issue in
meetings with Soviet officials. The NCSJ provided the senators with current
materials prior to their trip. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) also visited the USSR
and met with refuseniks.

AMENDMENT TO EXPAND REQUIREMENTS FOR MFN STATUS FAILS IN SENATE

An amendment introduced by Sen. James McClure (R-ID) to expand the requirements for
most-favored-nation (MFN) status, and opposed by the NCSJ and its member agencies,
failed to gather support in the Senate this week. The amendment, which was offered
to the trade bill, would link compliance with the human rights provisions of the
Helsinki Final Act with the granting of MFN status. The NCSJ believes that passage
of such legislation would remove the strength of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which
has been a useful tool for almost 15 years in dealing with the USSR on emigration.

NCSJ WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE TO ATTEND REPUBLICAN CONVENTION

NCSJ Washington Representative Mark Levin will attend the Republican convention in
New Orleans this month. Mark will be available to discuss the situation facing
Soviet Jews and to meet with convention delegates. Mark will also testify before
the Republican National Committee platform hearing.

CONGRESSIONAL EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF SOVIET JEWS CONTINUE

Reps. Howard Berman (D-CA) and Connie Morella (R-MD) collected 117 signatures for
a letter to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev concerning Boris and Esfir Orlov who
have been waiting to emigrate since 1977.

Rep. Joseph Brennan (D-ME), Robert Michel (R-IL), Lane Evans (D-IL), John Edward
Porter (R-IL), and Sid Yates (D-IL) and 70 of their colleagues wrote to Gorbachev
and other Soviet officials on behalf of the **Lein** family of Leningrad who have been
in refusal since 1978.

NCSJ ANNOUNCES JULY EMIGRATION FIGURES

The NCSJ announced that the number of Soviet Jews who emigrated from the USSR in
July reached 1,378.

National Conference on Soviet Jewry

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT BY MYRNA SHINBAUM, DIRECTOR, NCSJ
AT A PRESS CONFERENCE CONVENED BY THE
CONGRESSIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CAUCUS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- August 9, 1988. . . One of the most disconcerting by-products of "glasnost" is the tacit support offered by the Soviet authorities to ultra-nationalistic anti-Semitic organizations such as "Pamyat" (Memory).

Founded in 1980 by employees of the USSR Ministry of Aviation Industry ostensibly for the noble purpose of preserving historic monuments, "Pamyat" has in fact become a vehicle for the expression of virulent anti-Semitism, which is against Soviet law.

While "Pamyat's" true motives have been exposed in some of the Soviet media, there is strong evidence to suggest that the organization has official sanction, evidenced by its holding of "official" public meetings; reception of "Pamyat" delegations by high Soviet officials, including Boris Yeltsin, a former top Communist Party leader; and the failure of authorities to charge the organization with incitement of anti-Semitism and racial hostility, crimes under Article 74 of the RSFSR Criminal Code.

In recent months, there has been a dramatic rise in anti-Semitic incidents throughout the Soviet Union, including vandalization of cemeteries and synagogues, anti-Jewish demonstrations in Moscow and Leningrad, and increasing publication of anti-Semitic articles in the media.

In his meeting with President Reagan at Spaso House on May 30, during the Moscow summit, seventeen-year "secrecy" refusenik Yuli Kosharovsky, a leading activist in the Soviet Jewry movement, stated: ". . . A large amount of anti-Semitic literature is being published and distributed. Pogrom inciting organizations flourish under glasnost. The authorities, which claim to deplore previous evil, continue to perpetuate its results."

The Soviet response to President Reagan's genuine concern for Soviet Jewry is exemplified by the comment of Georgi Arbatov, head of the USA-Canada Institute, and a key advisor to General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, who stated recently that President Reagan's "pressure" on Jewish issues will result in increased anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

- MORE -

The NCSJ views official Soviet reaction to "Pamyat" as a litmus test of the leadership's self-proclaimed humanist aspirations. Therefore, we call upon the authorities to take immediate action against "Pamyat," and other demonstrably anti-Semitic organizations, by demanding the immediate cessation of their illegal propaganda, and by prosecuting those organizations which continue to violate Soviet law by disseminating their hate-filled and vicious lies.

We call upon the Soviet Union to bring glasnost to Soviet Jews: to legitimize Hebrew classes, a Moscow Jewish Association, Jewish clubs, cafes, publications, libraries and whatever cultural and religious institutions Soviet Jews request.

We also call upon Soviet authorities to fulfill its obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Helsinki Accords, and other international agreements to grant the Soviet Union's two-million Jews their basic human rights: Freedom to emigrate, and religious and cultural rights within the Soviet Union.



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date August 23, 1988
to Marc Tanenbaum
from Milton Ellerin *ME*
subject PAMYAT

I am taking the liberty of calling to your attention what reports to be an interview between Dimitri Vasilev, a leader in the Pamyat organization and a reporter for the Rome newspaper "La Repubblica."

The attached account appeared in the August 1988 issue of "Instauration," a viciously anti-Semitic monthly which caters to the better educated anti-Semite as distinguished from the semi-literate gutter bigot.

Kind personal regards.

ME:ea
 Att.

cc: David Singer
 Ira Silverman
 William Trosten

A Russian Nationalist Speaks Out

It is an Instauration desideratum, duty and mission to keep an eye on Pamyat, the somewhat wacky but always fascinating Russian patriotic organization that seems to be the one group in Russia unafraid to call a Zionist a Zionist and a Jew a Jew. Just the merest hint of such an equivalence is sufficient to give Western mediocrats and politicians the heebie-geebies.

Pravda, the Communist Party daily, is very unenthusiastic about Pamyat, which it describes as one of the "30,000 unofficial organizations" in the Soviet Union and "a group of extremists that incite national hostilities." In response, Dimitri Vasilev, the top banana of Pamyat, says, "Whenever any Soviet newspaper publishes an article criticizing Pamyat, we gain more members."

The following is a translation of an interview with Vasilev by Italian reporter Fiametta Cucurnia. At first, Vasilev was skeptical about the idea, demanding assurance from Signorina Cucurnia that she was "not a dirty liar in the pay of the cosmopolitans and of the U.S. dollar." The interview, which took place in Vasilev's home, was published in the Rome newspaper, La Repubblica (Feb. 26, 1988).

CUCURNIA: Tell me, Mr. Vasilev, how many members does Pamyat have?

VASILEV: There are approximately 20,000 monitored members, that is, members that we are able to monitor. Each of them has his own circle, however. If the state were to register us normally, there would be millions of us.

C: How do you manage to maintain contacts between the organization and members throughout the country?

V: That sounds like a KGB-type question. I will answer you by saying that we maintain only personal contacts, partly because an outright campaign of persecution is being organized against us. Pamyat members are being expelled from the Komsomol and Party. Bear in mind that there are numerous Party members in Pamyat's ranks. They prevent us from speaking on television and from holding public meetings with the press. It is because they fear us.

C: What is your platform?

V: We want to tackle and resolve the problems of our nation, by which I mean the Russian nation, since Pamyat was born in Russia. In fact, these problems are international problems since there are evil forces that would like to build their power on the ruins of the world's loftiest cultures. So whereas Lenin once said, "Proletarians of the world unite," now Pamyat says, "Patriots of the world unite." We have reached

the conclusion that it is no coincidence that we have been witnessing for years the destruction of our historic monuments, our traditions and the customs of our peoples -- in this specific incidence, of the Russian people. There is clearly some evil force wanting to rob the peoples of their memories and their material, historical and cultural wealth in order to prevent their moral progress.

C: Pardon me, but mankind can certainly not be said to have made no progress in recent years.

V: I am talking about moral development, not technological and scientific development, which is in fact a blind alley for mankind. It is technological and scientific progress that creates weapons. It is technological and scientific progress that brings closer the time of a sudden conflagration that will engulf us. Chernobyl has taught us this. This is why we are struggling for the protection of the environment, which is mankind's living space, against nuclear energy and against alcohol, which has inebriated the Russian people. This is clearly all part of a plan carefully devised by somebody

C: Who?

V: A terrible force active here and in your country, trying to destroy our culture -- a force of whose existence we became aware during our work to protect Russia's cultural heritage: Zionism and Freemasonry.

C: Mr. Vasilev, there is already much confusion in this regard. Please explain: When you say, "Zionists," do you mean the Jews?

V: Yes, always these Jews, as though there were nobody else in the world. The Jews live everywhere, own the capital, live like parasites throughout the world, emigrate freely from country to country, and are always depicted as the most unfortunate nation. Nobody is concerned about the Russian people, who are now the worst off and most unfortunate of all peoples. It is enough to read the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to realize who created this situation. However, not all Zionists are Jews and not all Jews are Zionists. This is why we are not anti-Semitic. Tell me, who invented the gas chambers? The Jews. The Freemasons, on the other hand, are the material executors of the Zionists' plans. It is a very serious matter

C: Tell me, what exactly is your attitude toward the Jewish population in the USSR and Moscow?

V: I will tell you just this: The ideologue of the destruction of our monuments and our culture was Yaroslavsky, whose real name was Gubelman. He was a Jew. Who

carried out this destruction? Kaganovich -- a Jew. Moreover, Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev were all Jews.

C: I do not understand.

V: You do not understand because you do not live here. You do not understand because you do not earn 120 rubles a month, because you are a foreigner. We have nothing against the Jews: There are some decent people even among them. However, our analysis of the facts always confronts us with the Jewish nationality. Were Beria and Yagoda not Jews? Were the administrators of many of the Stalinist prison camps not Jews? We are not anti-Semitic, but the truth must be told. Now 20 percent of the state's leadership posts are held by Jews, who represent only 0.69 percent of the population. This actually goes against the constitution. No less than 50 percent of the doctors of science and candidates are Jews, too. The majority of members of professional unions -- composers, writers, movie makers, jurists, medics and so forth -- are also Jews, and they are supposed to be persecuted. There is never any mention of the persecuted Russians. In any case, all Jews who have wanted to do so have emigrated with their pockets full of money, while the Russians have always been, and remain, poor. Nobody is concerned about them.

C: Be that as it may, there are no Jews within the Politburo and Secretariat now.

V: You are mistaken. I have my suspicions.

C: Surely it is not the case, is it, that Communists, Marxists, are Zionists?

V: I did not say that, but since you suggest it, I will bear it in mind

Ponderable Quote

During the 1980s, approximately 20 terrorist incidents and numerous other acts of violence, including extortion and threats, have either been claimed by or attributed to militant Jewish terrorists. Groups claiming credit for these attacks have been the United Jewish Underground, the Jewish Defense League, the Jewish Defenders and the Jewish Direct Action. Included in these attacks were smoke bombings, fire bombings and pipe bombings. As a result of these acts, three persons were killed and many more were injured.

FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin,
October 1987