

AJHS Finding Aid for the Margery Sanford Papers

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Sanford, Margery
Title:	Guide to the Margery Sanford Papers, undated, 1973-1980, 1984-1986, 1988 *P-889
Dates:	Creation: undated, 1973-1980, 1984-1986, 1988
Abstract:	Papers of Margery Sanford cover the period from the early 1970s to the late 1980s and document her activities as the Documentation Committee chairperson of South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry, as well as her individual efforts in the American Soviet Jewry Movement. The documents include correspondence, notes, memos, minutes, publications, news clippings, photographs, stickers and a flag.
Identification:	P-889
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Historical Note

<p>The Papers of Margery Sanford represent one collection housed within the Archive of the American Soviet Jewry Movement (AASJM). These papers reflect the effort, beginning in the 1960s through the late 1980s, of thousands of American Jews of all denominations and political orientations to stop the persecution and discrimination of Jews in the Soviet Union. The American Soviet Jewry Movement (ASJM) is considered to be the most influential Movements of the American Jewish community in the 20th century. The beginnings of the organized American Soviet Jewry Movement became a model for efforts to aid Soviet Jews in other countries, among them Great Britain, Canada, and France. The movement can be traced to the early 1960s, when the first organizations were created to address the specific problem of the persecution and isolation of Soviet Jews by the government of the Soviet Union.</p>

Margery Sanford was influenced to get involved in the struggle for Soviet Jewry by her first meeting with Refuseniks during her trip to the Soviet Union in July 1973. Upon her return, Mrs. Sanford publicly spoke at rallies, in synagogues and private homes throughout Miami. She organized massive writing appeals to Washington officials, and protests to the Soviet authorities. From 1975 through 1990 Margery Sanford served as Documentation Committee chairperson of the South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry. In that capacity she co-edited and published, via the Miami Jewish Federation, 15 books on Refuseniks case histories. These publications proved to be the most important contribution of the South Florida community to the international movement for the rights of Soviet Jews. The case history books were distributed among U.S. elected officials and to members of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews. They were used nationwide for twinning and Adopt-a-Family programs, briefing tourists and press releases, and became the basis for the long term Congressional Vigil on Soviet Jewry.

Scope and Content Note

<p>Papers of Margery Sanford cover the period from the early 1970s to the late 1980s and document her activities as the Documentation Committee chairperson of South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry, as well as her individual efforts in the American Soviet Jewry Movement. The documents include correspondence, notes, memos, minutes, publications, news clippings, photographs, stickers and a flag.</p>

Blue flag with white Star of David, presented by Morton Freiman at the 1976 Brussels Conference on Soviet Jewry as a proposed symbol of liberty for Soviet Jews can be found in the American Jewish Society museum collection under the accession number <s class="a" target="extref">2010.009.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

The collection is open to all researchers, except items that may be restricted due to their fragility, or privacy.

Acquisition Information

Donated by Margery Sanford in 2010.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into a single series.

[Papers of Margery Sanford, undated, 1973-1980, 1984-1986, 1988](#)

Preferred Citation

Published citations should take the following form:

Description of item, date of item, Papers of Margery Sanford, P-889, Box #, Folder #, Collection of the American Jewish Historical Society, New York, NY.

Related Material

The Papers of Margery Sanford is one individual collection within the Archive of the American Soviet Jewry Movement (AASJM) located at the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS). Other Soviet Jewry Movement collections at AJHS include the records of [Action for Soviet Jewry \(I-487\)](#), the [National Conference on Soviet Jewry \(NCSJ; I-181 and I-181A\)](#), the [Union of Councils for Soviet Jews \(I-410, I-410A\)](#), Medical Mobilization for Soviet Jewry, the [papers of Joel Ackerman \(P-787\)](#), [Julia Mates Cheney \(P-806\)](#), [Jerry Goodman \(P-863\)](#), [Laurel and Alan J. Gould \(P-866\)](#), [Carolyn W. Sanger \(P-870\)](#), [Si Frumkin \(P-871\)](#), [Elaine Pittell \(P-873\)](#), [Sanford A. Gradinger \(P-880\)](#), [Shaul Osadchey \(P-882\)](#), [Leonard S. Cahan \(P-883\)](#), [Doris H. Goldstein \(P-887\)](#) and [David H. Hill \(P-888\)](#).

Individual accounts of activities within the Soviet Jewry Movement are preserved in the [UJA Oral History Collection \(I-433\)](#), which includes accounts from members of the following organizations: the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, Bay Area Council on Soviet Jews (BACSJ), Seattle Action for Soviet Jews, Houston Action for Soviet Jews, Chicago Action for Soviet Jews, Colorado Committee of Concern for Soviet Jews and the National Conference on Soviet Jewry. Interviewees include accounts by Lillian Forman (BACSJ), Ann Polunsky, Morey Schapira, Myrtle Sitowitz, Deborah Turkin, David Waksberg, Sylvia Weinberg and Dolores Wilkenfeld. In addition, posters related to the Soviet Jewry Movement can be found in the [Jewish Student Organizations Collection \(I-61\)](#).

Additional materials from other collections include records dealing with the Student Struggle for Soviet

Jewry (SSSJ) located within the [North American Jewish Students Appeal \(NAJSA, I-338\)](#) and the records of the [National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council \(NJCRCAC, I-172\)](#). Related records are also located at the AJHS in Newton Centre, MA including [memorabilia and ephemera of the New England Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry \(I-237\)](#) and the [Records of the Student Coalition for Soviet Jewry – Brandeis University \(I-493\)](#).

Library of YIVO Institute for Jewish Research holds several publications by Margery Sanford on the subject of Soviet Jews.

Use Restrictions

No permission is required to quote, reproduce or otherwise publish manuscript materials found in this collection, as long as the usage is scholarly, educational, and non-commercial. For inquiries about other usage, please contact the Director of Collections and Engagement at mmeyers@ajhs.org.

For reference questions, please email: inquiries@cjh.org

Controlled Access Headings

- Antisemitism
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Emigration and immigration
- Flags
- Human rights
- Jews -- Soviet Union -- Politics and government
- Jews, Soviet
- Memorandums
- Miami (Fla.)
- Notes (documents)
- Photographs
- Publications (documents)
- Refuseniks
- Soviet Union
- Stickers
- United States

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Margery Sanford Papers, undated, 1973-1980, 1984-1986, 1988

Box Folder

1	1	Brochures and Near-Print Materials by South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry, undated, 1988
1	2	Correspondence, Notes, Memos, Clippings, Trip Report, undated, 1973-1979, 1984-1986
1	3	Letters to Margery Sanford from Jews in the USSR and Soviet Jewish Immigrants in Israel, undated, 1980
1	4	<i>New Heroes, The</i> , Books I-IV, Publication by the Student Struggle for Soviet Jews, undated, 1979
1	5	Photographs and Stickers, undated