

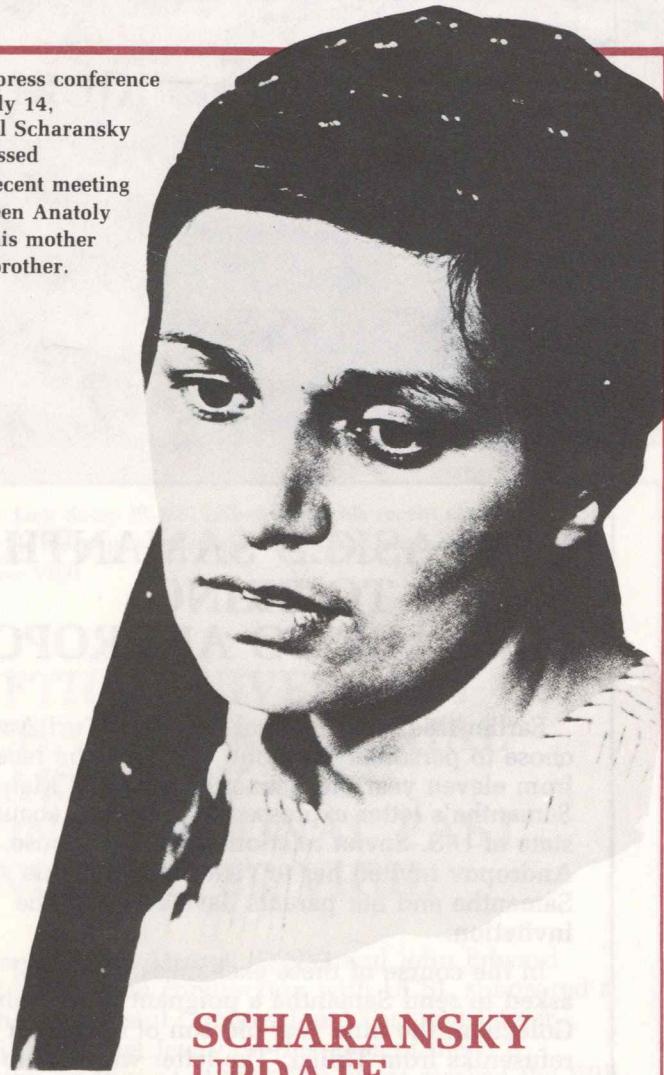


UCSJ QUARTERLY REPORT

Union of Councils for Soviet Jews • 1411 K Street, NW, Suite 402 • Washington, D.C. 20005 • (202) 393-4117

AUGUST, 1983

At a press conference on July 14, Avital Scharansky discussed the recent meeting between Anatoly and his mother and brother.



SCHARANSKY UPDATE

Anatoly Scharansky is "spiritually and morally very strong, (but) physically he has deteriorated so badly that his mother was barely able to recognize him," Anatoly's wife, Avital, reported at a July 14th UCSJ press conference.

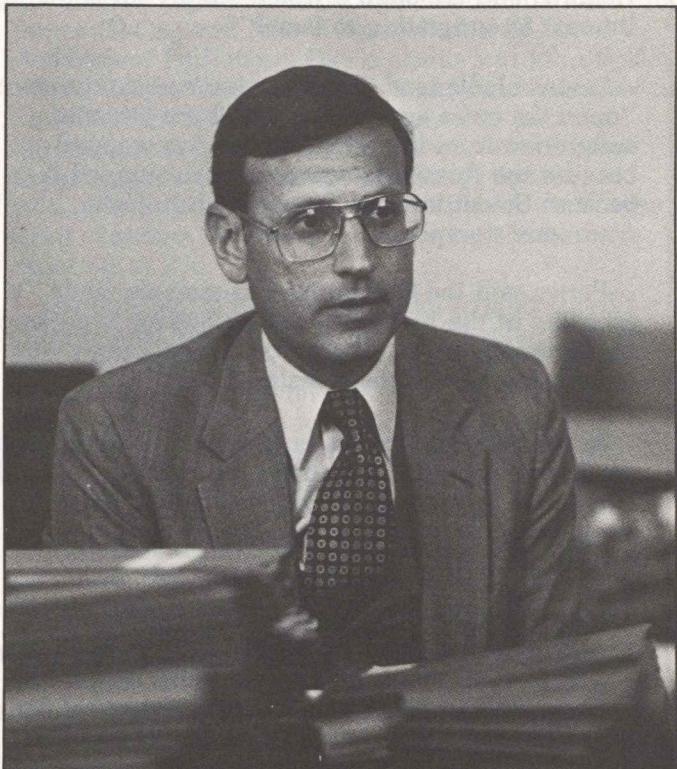
For the first time in 18 months, Anatoly was allowed a visit from his mother and brother. His family said that their meeting with him was conducted through a glass barrier. They reported that during the visit Anatoly was experiencing chest pain, sat hunched over, has lost his hair, and although he gained some weight, still appeared emaciated.

During his hunger strike, Anatoly had been beaten until unconscious, brutally force-fed, denied proper medical attention, and weighed a mere 77 pounds. *

UCSJ ENGAGES LEGAL COUNSEL

We are proud to announce that Stuart Eizenstat became the UCSJ legal counsel in May. Eizenstat is regarded as an expert in political, legal and Soviet Jewry matters and will be instrumental in helping draft the charter for the new Interparliamentary Group for Human Rights (see IPG story on page 5).

Eizenstat obtained his law degree from Harvard Law School in 1967, and a B.A., Phi Beta Kappa, from the University of North Carolina, 1964. Recently, he served as Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs and Policy in the Carter Administration. Presently, he is a partner in the law firm of Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy. He is also an Adjunct Lecturer at the J.F.K. School of Government at Harvard University. As a result of his work on numerous Jewish and foreign affairs issues, he is listed in several prestigious directories including, Who's Who in American Jewry; Who's Who in World Jewry; Who's Who in America; and Who's Who in American Politics. *



Stuart Eizenstat, legal counsel for UCSJ, was a domestic advisor in the Carter Administration.

UCSJ BLASTS ANTI-ZIONIST COMMITTEE

The newly formed official "Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Public" held a press conference in Moscow on June 6, 1983. At the conference, they announced that most Soviet Jews who wanted to emigrate had already done so and that "family reunification has essentially been completed. For this reason, emigration has diminished." Committee leader Samuel Zivs claimed that Western sources recording thousands of Jews desiring exit visas represented the "juggling of figures by Zionist propaganda." In addition, Yuri Kolesnikov, a writer and member of this group, publicly accused the Jews of collaboration with the Gestapo and SS during World War II.

These statements by the Committee have engendered an atmosphere of fear among the Soviet Jewish community, and have fueled the long festering anti-Semitism.

To combat the Soviet's propaganda campaign, the UCSJ held a press conference in conjunction with Reps. John Edward Porter (R-IL) and Tom Lantos (D-CA), cochairs of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. UCSJ Executive Director Paul Meek denounced the Anti-Zionist Committee's pronouncements as "a collection of false statements, blatant lies, and vicious anti-Semitic propaganda... While Soviet officials claim there is no discrimination against Jews, Soviet Jews are forbidden to practice their religion, to speak or learn Hebrew, and are often arrested simply for showing interest in emigrating to Israel."

Lantos challenged Soviet leader Yuri Andropov to "open the gates and let the world see whether emigration from the Soviet Union has stopped because the Russian government has stopped it or because Soviet Jews no longer wish to leave Andropov's empire."

Porter said the Committee's comments made "a mockery of the hardships and sufferings experienced by thousands upon thousands of Soviet Jews who have made known their desire to leave."

In retaliation to the Congressmen's charges, Soviet News Agency TASS broadcast on Moscow Radio that "in actual fact it was the three Congressmen who were lying. [It is] but an episode of another anti-Soviet campaign."

The UCSJ also responded to the Anti-Zionist Committee through the publication of a message in the New York Times on June 12, 1983. Copies of this appeal were circulated to all member councils and appeared in numerous other publications.

Lastly, divided families in the West have held demonstrations protesting the Committee's claims that family reunification has been completed by bearing personal testimony to the thousands of miles that separate husbands from wives, and parents from children and grandchildren. *

EMIGRATION FIGURES 1983

	81
January	81
February	123
March	101
April	114
May	116
June	102

UCSJ ASKED SAMANTHA SMITH TO BRING MESSAGE TO ANDROPOV

Earlier this year, General Secretary Yuri Andropov chose to personally respond to a letter he received from eleven year old Samantha Smith of Maine. Samantha's letter expressed her concern about the state of U.S.-Soviet relations and in response Andropov invited her to visit the USSR this summer. Samantha and her parents have accepted the invitation.

In the course of these exchanges, the UCSJ was asked to send Samantha a poignant letter from Avi Goldstein, the nine year old son of long-term refuseniks from Tbilisi. The letter was sent to her with a personal plea from President Lynn Singer to raise the Goldstein case during her meeting with Andropov. Avi Goldstein asked Samantha to:

"forward my letter to Mr. Andropov because he never answered my letters sent directly to him. He is nice enough to invite you to the pioneer camps at the Black Sea shore in the USSR but he denies my right to travel to Israel. I ask you, my American friend, to make this letter known to Mr. Andropov. Having a precedent already, you are to expect an answer this time also. The answer could be exit visas for my family . . ."

The UCSJ announced Avi Goldstein's letter during a press conference on June 30, 1983.

Samantha Smith did not respond to the UCSJ request. *



UCSJ Advisory Board Chairman Robert Gordon, UCSJ Vice-President Ruth Newman, UCSJ President Lynn Singer, Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor, and UCSJ Vice-President Pamela Cohen (from left to right) discussed new strategies for supporting human rights in the USSR at the UCSJ Think Tank.

THINK TANK

In an effort to develop strategies for approaching the Andropov regime and its potential successors with regard to Soviet Jewry, the UCSJ hosted a "Think Tank" on July 13, 1983 in Washington, D.C. Former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski was the keynote speaker. Also participating were key decisionmakers from the U.S. Congress, Department of State, White House, and the human rights community. Everyone agreed that the Interparliamentary Group (IPG) will play a pivotal advocacy role in Soviet Jewish emigration and cultural expression.

President Lynn Singer remarked, "It is clear that the Soviet Jewry movement in the West will need a new approach in the 80's to deal with the Soviet government. As a result of this session, we hope to pursue innovative and effective strategies for political and grassroots activities on behalf of Soviet Jews." *

SYMPOSIUM HELD ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews and the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) convened a one-day Symposium on U.S.-Soviet relations on May 9, 1983 in Washington,

D.C. More than 80 prominent Washington decisionmakers from the U.S. Congress, State Department, White House, human rights groups and several foreign embassies attempted to analyze the current problems and prospects in U.S.-Soviet relations.

The discussion touched on the many aspects of U.S.-Soviet relations which affect human rights in the Soviet Union: emigration policy, dissent, trade and technology transfer, arms control, national security, and the changing political climate between the two nations.

Among the discussants were: William Hyland, former National Security Council advisor in the Ford administration; Thomas Simons, director of the State Department Bureau of Soviet Affairs; John Hardt, senior specialist in Soviet economy, Congressional Research Service, and Paula Dobriansky of the National Security Council.

Barry Blechman, former Assistant Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the Carter Administration, addressed the group at the luncheon session. Blechman proposed the abolition of the Arms Control Agency in an effort to integrate arms control with the normal foreign policy apparatus.

The UCSJ and CSIS attempted to contribute a positive input towards restoring a normalization of relations. The Symposium represents a strong commitment towards maintaining Jewish emigration as a top priority on the U.S.-Soviet agenda. *

UCSJ PRESENTS RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADMINISTRATION

President Lynn Singer made several recommendations aimed at focusing Reagan Administration attention on the heightened anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. The recommendations were made before a joint session of the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations and the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

The UCSJ recommended that:

- President Reagan, while working closely with our Western European allies and other interested nations, raise the issue of virulent Soviet anti-Semitism with Yuri Andropov.
- The American consulate in Kiev be reopened.
- The U.S. Embassy in Moscow work with the Embassies of our allies in setting up informal meetings with Soviet human rights activists.
- An experts meeting on human rights and family reunification be held as a follow-up to the Madrid Review Conference.
- Soviet Jewry and human rights be at the top of the agenda for U.S.-Soviet relations. The President should raise the issue of Soviet Jewry at the highest level and at every appropriate opportunity in bilateral negotiations concerning trade, arms control, exchanges, technology transfer and other areas of cooperation.
- All Members of Congress be in regular and direct contact with Soviet officials both in Washington and in Moscow to raise the Soviet Jewry issue and remind the Soviets of their international obligations under the Helsinki Final Act and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. *

UCSJ ANNUAL MEETING IN OCTOBER

UCSJ will hold its annual meeting in Washington, D.C. on October 14-17 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Capitol Hill. Soviet Jewry activists from UCSJ affiliates around the world, academics and legislators will attend four days of seminars and strategy planning workshops. All members are encouraged to attend! PUT THE DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

UPDATE ON SOVIET JEWISH PRISONERS

- Prominent Hebrew teacher and Jewish cultural activist **Iosif Begun** will stand trial on July 29, 1983 on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." Begun has already served five years in Siberian exile for his efforts to have Hebrew instruction recognized as a profession in the Soviet Union. Begun now faces a maximum sentence of seven years in prison and five years in internal exile.
- **Yuri Tarnopolsky** of Kharkov was sentenced on June 30, 1983 to three years in a labor camp in charges of Article 190-1 of the Russian criminal code, "slandering the Soviet state." Tarnopolsky and his family have been refused exit visas since 1976.
- **Lev Elbert**, a leading activist in the Kiev Jewish community was sentenced on May 25, 1983 to one year in prison camp for "evasion of army service by a reservist." Already he has been relegated to "punishment cell" for reasons unknown and faces the possibility of a prolonged sentence. Elbert, 35, is an engineer and translator. He and his wife and son have been refuseniks for nine years.
- On a more positive note, 15 members of the **Vashchenko family** were granted emigration visas and have settled in Israel. Fifteen other Pentecostals, including the **Chymkhalovs**, received permission to emigrate and will soon join their co-religionists in Israel. Five members of the Vashchenko family and two members of another Pentecostal family, the Chymkhalovs, sought refuge in the American Embassy in Moscow for four years after having suffered persecution in Siberia for their religious beliefs. Earlier this year, the Vashchenkos agreed to leave the Embassy and return to Siberia after assurances by Soviet officials that emigration visas would be forthcoming. *

ACTION STILL NEEDED!

Please write to President Reagan, Secretary of State Shultz and Ambassador Dobrinin, protesting the treatment of Soviet Jews and prisoners of conscience.

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

The White House
Washington, DC 20500

SECRETARY OF STATE GEORGE SHULTZ

Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

AMBASSADOR ANATOLY DOBRININ

Soviet Embassy
1125 16 St., NW
Washington, DC 20036



Rep. Jack Kemp (R-NY) talked about his recent visit to the USSR and his meetings with refuseniks at the Congressional Fast and Prayer Vigil.

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF SCHARANSKY'S TRIAL MARKED BY CONGRESSIONAL FAST AND PRAYER VIGIL

Reps. Robert Mrazek (D-NY) and John Edward Porter (R-IL), in conjunction with UCSJ, sponsored a highly successful Congressional Fast and Prayer Vigil for Soviet Jewry on the steps of the U.S. Capitol on July 14, 1983. This event marked the fifth anniversary of Anatoly Scharansky's trial, in which he was sentenced to 13 years of prison and labor camp for "espionage". (Anatoly's real crime was his desire to emigrate from Russia.) Over 70 Members of Congress, along with religious leaders and human rights advocates, stood in solidarity with thousands of Soviet Jews and others who are striving to leave the Soviet Union and join their families in the West.

Porter and Mrazek stated, "It is fitting that we should demonstrate our continuing concern over the treatment of Anatoly Scharansky, and indeed all Soviet Jews, in conjunction with this historic event. Our participation in a national day of fasting and prayer will send a signal to the Soviet Union that the United States clearly stands on the side of human justice and decency." *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP FORMED

The UCSJ has formed an Interparliamentary Group for Human Rights in the Soviet Union (IPG).

IPG is a coalition of parliamentarians in the U.S., Western Europe and Canada. In the U.S., the cosponsors are Senators Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ) and Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Representatives Tom Lantos (D-CA) and John Edward Porter (R-IL). Members of Parliament David Smith and John Bosley will be cosponsors in Canada, and British Member of Parliament Vivian Bendel has agreed to join. Agreements in principle have been received from parliamentarians in France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Canada, Great Britain and the U.S. Fifteen other countries in Western Europe and Asia are expected to join.

The purpose of the IPG is twofold: 1) to coordinate international advocacy on behalf of Soviet human rights activists; and 2) to act as an adjunct to bilateral and multilateral international diplomatic efforts. Members hope to work together to draw attention to Soviet human rights abuses through press conferences, resolutions, meetings with Soviet officials, and travel to the USSR.

UCSJ Executive Director Paul Meek has been appointed IPG Executive Director. Meek will be in Europe during 1983-1984 to work with UCSJ international affiliates and parliamentarians in putting the IPG program together.

A conference is planned for Paris, France in Spring 1984. At that time, IPG members will choose six issues and dates in 1984-85 at which all countries' officials will meet. *

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USSR ACCUSES LEV ELBERT OF DRUG SMUGGLING

ELBERT THREATENS SUICIDE

WIFE BEGINS HUNGER STRIKE

As the Quarterly Report goes to press, UCSJ has learned more of the ugly details of refusenik Lev Elbert's case (see UPDATE, page 4).

Our earlier reports were that Elbert was sentenced to one year in prison for "evasion of army service by a reservist" and then detained in a punishment cell for unknown reasons. We now know the "official" Soviet reason for Lev's detainment . . . prison officials claim they found hashish sewn into one of Elbert's undershirts.

There is little doubt that the drugs were planted during his transfer from the prison to the labor camp to provide camp officials with a convenient excuse to further punish a leading activist of the Kiev Jewish community. Elbert has not been given any opportunity to challenge these new charges against him. Instead, he was thrown into an isolation cell while the official investigation began. This investigation is under Article 229 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code which carries a sentence of up to three years in prison. The investigation began on July 4th and is scheduled to close on August 26th.

Despite the threat of even more years in prison, Lev Elbert has not remained silent. Forced to share an isolation cell with criminal homosexuals, Elbert banged on the cell door for four days demanding to be transferred. When no one responded and with his palms bleeding, he began a five day hunger strike. In a final act of desperation, Elbert took a piece of glass and threatened to cut his wrists — which finally gained the attention of the guard, and the Kiev Procuratora changed Elbert's cell.

On July 18th, fourteen days after she first learned of her husband's ordeal, Inna Elbert was told she could visit Lev. When Inna learned of the torture Lev suffered, she was shocked and outraged. To show her frustration with the Soviet legal process and her concern for her husband, Inna began a hunger strike on Monday, August 1st.

Before she began her hunger strike, Inna sent a message to Lynn Singer, President of UCSJ. The text of this message follows.

My very dear Lynn,

Despite the fact that I am absolutely sure Lynn that people like you and Genya will not leave me now to face alone this most unjust fate, I am profoundly grateful to you for everything, for your immediate response, for everything that you are doing.

Yes, my dear Lynn, I will be very strong as you ask me to be. I will do everything for my husband as you know. A person must have pride, especially a Jew. I wish all people to understand that I am doing it not because he is only my husband, but because he is a completely honest and decent person. When they are falsely accusing him, it is just the beginning. They will be doing the same to others. They are attempting to destroy everything, all the finest and the best that we possess here.

They want to take away my husband from me for many, many years. We don't deserve it, because all we have ever wanted was to go to our homeland and live with our family there, just as many others here do, nothing else. This provocation is so monstrous that I lost my patience, that is why such a strong response [hunger strike]. I never imagined that they would stoop to that.

I beg you please, please help my mother. Call her, please help me to calm her. She has not called yet. I am afraid that any moment they will disconnect the telephone. I am afraid to imagine what she felt when she found out about what I am about to do. Tell her that I am taking this step consciously. Tell her I cannot live without my husband. She knows what he means to me. She must understand me.

I am very nervous that they will disconnect my phone. She should not worry, because Lev's parents are here with me. She should not worry about me because they cannot do anything worse to me than what they have already done. When they took away Lev, they took away everything from me. Nothing worse can happen to me. Tell her that I know how much she loved my father, and that in the same situation she would have done the same that I am doing for my husband.

Tell her today I went to my father's grave. I put flowers on the grave, I told him everything. I know he would approve and agree with what I am doing today. Tell her to be strong.

Inna Elbert's strength is a message for us all. We must not let her plea for help and support for her beloved husband go unanswered.

ALL OF US MUST ACT TODAY.

Together, we must raise a cry that the Soviet Union will not be able to ignore. We ask you, on behalf of Inna and Lev Elbert, to cable the Soviet ambassador, Anatoly Dobrinin, immediately and protest the false charges against Lev Elbert. As Inna Elbert said, "This is only the beginning."

Let us all make sure the Soviets know she does not stand alone. Send your telegrams to:

Ambassador Anatoly Dobrinin
Soviet Embassy
1125 16 St., NW
Washington, DC 20036

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