



INFORMATION FROM THE
UNION OF COUNCILS FOR SOVIET JEWS
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ALERT

VOL. VIII NO. 19 DATE August 22, 1983

REMEMBER THE "NIGHT OF THE MURDERED POETS"

August 12 commemorated the thirty-first anniversary of the "Night of the Murdered Poets." On that night, 24 Soviet Jewish artists, writers, musicians, poets, and actors were executed by the Stalin government in an effort to obliterate Jewish culture in the Soviet Union. These executions were the culmination of the attack on Jewish life during the late 1940's and were a precursor to the notorious Doctor's Plot in 1953, when Jewish doctors were accused of murdering prominent Soviet leaders.

The UCSJ undertook an emergency campaign to call attention to the plight of today's Hebrew teachers in the USSR by drawing a parallel to the events of 1952. Of particular concern is the fate of Hebrew teachers LEV ELBERT, a Prisoner of Conscience now under investigation for drug possession, and IOSEF BEGUN, now awaiting trial in Vladimir Prison on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

Demonstrations, editorials, and letter-writing campaigns were organized by UCSJ Councils in Washington, Chicago, Florida, Boston, New York, Denver, Cincinnati, Los Angeles and San Francisco. UCSJ donors in all 50 states have sent telegrams to Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrinin protesting the harsh treatment of Lev Elbert and Iosef Begun.

In July, only 167 Jews were allowed to emigrate, making a total of 804 for 1983, the lowest annual emigration figure since the beginning of the Soviet Jewry movement.

While many Jews, seeing that there is no future in the Soviet Union, focus their hopes on emigrating to Israel, they watch as the gates to freedom continue to close.

In remembering the "Night of the Murdered Poets," the UCSJ holds the Soviet government responsible for the fate of contemporary Soviet Jewish activists like Iosef Begun and Lev Elbert and the thousands of others whose means of cultural expression are being destroyed by a repressive and anti-Semitic regime.



LEV and INNA ELBERT

A new prisoner PIOTR NIKOLAEVICH DOBROVENSKY has been taken in Zapsoroska. The family is not previously knowns and is getting no help. Piotr, a stone maker was arrested for engaging in private enterprise. His Aunt lives in the United States and was an associate of Gus Hall, U.S. Communist Party leader. Piotr applied three or four times to emigrate. Send letters of support to Piotr and his Mother at the following address: USSR/RSFSR/Volniansk 332000/Zaporozhskaya Oblast/Uchr. Ya. - 130/20 A7/Dobrovensky, Piotr Nikolaevich.

USSR/Ukarinian SSR/Dnepropetrovsk 320029/Ul. Kasla Libknekhta 35/4/Dobrovenskaya, Rahkil Pinchusovna.

* * *

At the 35th Annual Meeting of the American Association for Clinical Chemistry, more than 150 participants sent a petition to Soviet authorities appealing for the release of DR. YURI TARNOPOLSKY, a 47-year-old chemist from Kharkhov. Send letters of support to: USSR/Kharkhov 310002/Krasnoznamery 2117/Tarnopolsky, Yuri.

* * *

The 70th birthday of internationally renowned Soviet scientist ALEXANDER LERNER was marked August 11, 1983 at a special session of the Joint International Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Kalshrue, West Germany. Attendees sent an appeal to President Yuri Andropov, Mr. R.A. Kuznetzov, head of the emigration office, and Academician A.P. Aleksandrov, president of the Soviet Academy of Science. Send birthday greetings to Dr. Lerner: USSR/RSFSR/Moscow 117333/ul. Dimitry Ulianova 4-2-322/Lerner, Alexander

* * *

At a joint mathematics meeting of the American Mathematical Society and the Mathematical Association of America, in Albany, New York, one hundred American mathematicians petitioned Soviet President Yuri Andropov for the release of their colleague IOSEF BEGUN. Begun has been detained for over nine months in a Soviet jail and faces imminent trial. Protest by writing to Anatoly Dobrinin, Ambassador, Soviet Embassy, 1125 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

* * *

Secretary of the Interior James Watt met with members of the South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry. He promised to discuss Soviet Jewry with President Reagan and work actively on their behalf.

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ISRAIL SUKONIK and family from Vilnius have emigrated.

* * *

Renewal of the American effect to determine the whereabouts of RAOUL WALLENBERG, the Swedish diplomat arrested by the Russians after he saved approximately 100,000 Hungarian Jews during World War II, has been proposed in testimony the House Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Relations.

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ELBERT UPDATE

Latest information on LEV ELBERT reveals the depths the Soviet authorities have sunken to in their efforts to implicate Elbert with possession of hashish. A woman claiming to be the mother of a prisoner in the same camp as Lev paid a visit to the Elbert house in Kiev. She told Lev's father, CHAIM, that she was relaying a message from Lev to "rid the house of all illegal drugs" because there would be a KGB search. Lev's father told her there were no drugs in the house, and the woman then left in a gray Volvo.

Chaim Elbert reported the incident to the police immediately and Lev's wife, INNA, sent a complaint to Andropov.

Protest this latest KGB effort to entrap the Elbert family. Write to:

Ambassador Anatoly Dorbinin
Soviet Embassy
1125 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500



Rachel Yefimovna, lately of Russia, arrives in Lexington tonight to be reunited with her daughter Marina Mirman. Yefimovna, who has been attempting to leave the Soviet for four years, is shown in a 1950s photo with her husband, Boris, who died before receiving the coveted exit visa.

Soviet family reunites at last

By Tracey O'Shaughnessy

Rachel Yefimovna Brainin, the 63-year-old Russian mother of Lexington resident Marina Mirman is en route now to a family reunion she has waited nearly five years to attend.

Tonight at 8:49 p.m. at Logan International Airport, Brainin will become one of the dwindling numbers of Soviet Jews that have recently attained the right to emigrate to the United States.

In the face of a growing crackdown on

Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, Lexington's Boris Marina, Brainin's son-in-law, considers the emigration "a marvel."

"It's something that seldom happens, and when it happens it's like a miracle," he said.

Brainin was initially denied an exit visa to the U.S. because, as a rubber engineer in a Russian tire factory, she was deemed as having access to classified state secrets.

But, Barbara Palant of 16 Slocum Road, a

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The Night of the Murdered Poets

EDITOR, The Jewish Floridian:

On Aug. 12 we commemorate a tragic anniversary for Soviet Jews — 31 years ago on that date, 24 Jewish intellectuals were led to the basement of Moscow's Lubianka Prison and executed. Known as the "Night of the Murdered Poets," the execution of these writers, scientists, actors, and physicians was part of Stalin's goal to eradicate Jewish culture in the USSR.

This anniversary can, in reality, be commemorated every day of the year, for although 31 years have passed, each day in the USSR brings Soviet Jews closer to that terrible time in 1952. The repression of Jewish culture is at an all-time high, and Jewish emigration from the country is the lowest it has been since the start of the Soviet Jewry emigration movement in 1970.

The newest tactic of the Soviet government may be the ultimate in contempt for human rights — the creation of an official front group called the "Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Re-

public," made up of prominent Soviets of Jewish descent. Twisting and distorting the truth, this committee's vicious and dangerous lies have included asserting that the reunification of all divided families is "essentially complete," that the "vast majority" of Jews who wish to leave have already done so, that anti-Semitism does not exist in the USSR, and that Zionism is "increasingly modeled on the ideas and methods of Hitler."

For the first time, we are not just talking about losing Jewish souls — we are worried about Jewish lives. Refuseniks are now in physical danger, and statements from the "Anti-Zionist Committee" must be refuted from all corners of the world. We must let our voices be heard. We must never be silent again. That is our strongest weapon against repression and persecution.

HINDA CANTOR
Chairman,
South Florida Conference
on Soviet Jewry

Russian family reunites

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member of Action for Soviet Jewry, says that such an assumption is "ridiculous" in considering Brainin's position and the fact that she has been retired for eight years.

Brainin and her late husband, Zachar, applied together three times for a visa to exit the Soviet Union and were denied three times. After the third request, Brainin's husband died.

She applied a fourth time and was again refused. At twelve years of age, her grandson Iliya wrote a letter to then Premier Leonid Brezhnev pleading for her visa. Brainin was called into the immigration office and told her grandson's letters would do no good.

But back in the United States, her family kept trying. "I definitely know that in her case, if we didn't do something and if she didn't do something, she would never get out," her daughter Marina said. "Nobody can know why sometimes they let people out and sometimes, in the same situation, they don't. In some cases, it's just random strategy," she said.

While Brainin wrote letters to the administration on her end, Representatives Edward Markey, James Shannon and Stephen Doran all wrote to the Soviet government requesting Brainin's exit visa.

Last fall, the Mirmans took part in a demonstration by a group of 36 Russian emigres who travelled to Washington, D.C. to draw attention to their plight for release of family members remaining in the Soviet Union. It was the first time such a group organized, lobbied and demonstrated in Washington for such a reason.

Palant of the Waltham-based Action for Soviet Jewry suggested that the Washington demonstration may have been the cutting edge in allowing Brainin to leave the country. Of the 34 families that attended the Septem-

ber demonstration, six families have now been reunited, one-sixth of the total.

Ever since the changeover from Brezhnev to Yuri Andropov, Soviet emigration has plummeted significantly, according to Lexington resident Judy Patkin, also of Action for Soviet Jewry. The former head of the K.G.B., she said, is "well qualified for oppression."

Palant said that the number of Jews now emigrating to the United States has dropped from the 2,000-4,000 a month figures of the 70s to a little over 100 a month currently — an all-time low.

She estimates that with the rate of emigration remaining as is, only 12,000 Jewish emigres will be allowed into the U.S. this year, compared to a 51,000 a year rate in past decades.

Patkin commented that "it's almost impossible to get out now."

The tendency now, Palant said, is to give exit visas to those people over 65 who would be receiving pensions and retirement benefits from the country. "This then reduces the Soviet's deficit and increases ours," she said.

When Mirman recently travelled to Italy where his mother-in-law was having her papers processed, he said that his 64-year-old relative was one of the "youngest people there. Most of the people were in their seventies or eighties, in wheelchairs...very sick."

The Soviet government maintains that there is no problem with Soviet Jewry and that those Jews who desired to leave the country have already left. That, according to Palant, is an "out and out lie."

The Soviet Government needs the Jews, Palant said, as "political pawns to be bartered and traded. Internally, they keep the people occupied."

"You need a scapegoat to distract the frustrations of the Soviet community. The Jews in the Soviet Union have served that function."

UCSJ ANNUAL MEETING.....WASHINGTON, D.C.

JOIN WITH US ON OCTOBER 14-17, 1983

HYATT REGENCY HOTEL ON CAPITOL HILL
400 New Jersey Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 737-1234

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- o Shabbat Dinner with Separated Families
- o State Department Briefing
- o Anatoly Shcharansky Freedom Award Reception
- o Reception Honoring Members of Congress
- o Vigil at Soviet Embassy
- o Workshops on:
 - Scientific Exchanges
 - Media
 - US-Soviet Relations
 - Helsinki Accords
 - Legal Advocacy
 - Congress
 - Community Action
- o Resource Room/Audio Visual
- o Former Leading Refuseniks from Israel
- o Representatives from the White House, State Department, Congress, Journalists, International Affiliates



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