



The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews is a Washington-based, independent organization dedicated to the freedom of emigration and human rights for all Soviet Jews.

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Four Refuseniks Sentenced

Yuli Edelshtein

Yuli Edelshtein, a prominent Moscow Hebrew teacher, was sentenced on December 19 to three years in prison camp for the charge of "illegal drug trafficking." Edelshtein had been arrested on September 4 after the KGB allegedly found drugs in a matchbox during a search of his home. Also confiscated during that search were Hebrew books and items left by foreigners whom Soviet authorities accused of "coming and corrupting Jewish youth with medieval and mystical drug rituals."

Edelshtein, 26, had applied unsuccessfully for a visa to leave for Israel with his wife, Tatiana. He was said to have irritated officials by giving Hebrew lessons without authorization. Clandestine Hebrew classes are one way of maintaining the spirit,

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Nadezhda Fradkova

On December 17, 38 year old Nadezhda Fradkova was sentenced to two years in prison for "parasitism." The charge previously carried a maximum one-year sentence, but was recently changed as part of the new laws cracking down on Refuseniks.

Fradkova's case illustrates the Fradkova's friends were at the courthouse, none were allowed inside to witness the trial. Her mother is dead and until this year, she had not seen her father in 36 years.

Fradkova's case illustrates the painful consequences Soviet Jews face when they apply to emigrate. They are often fired from their jobs and the KGB makes certain that they are unable to get other jobs in their fields. Further, menial jobs are difficult to get because the KGB advises

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Yakov Levin

On November 20th, 26 year-old unofficial Jewish teacher Yakov Levin of Odessa was sentenced to three years for "anti-Soviet slander". According to the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, the proceedings were "an object lesson by the KGB on how they intend to try the other Jewish educators also recently jailed in this ominous new wave of oppression".

Levin was arrested on August 10th, after he refused to give false testimony against fellow unofficial teacher Yakov Mesh, and a week before his scheduled wedding to 22 year-old Yehudit Nepomniashchy, whom the SSSJ called "the soul of Jewish revival in Odessa."

The frail defendant was brought on November 15th to an Odessa courthouse in a closed car. Other

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Yosef Bernstein

Forty-seven year-old design engineer, Yosef Bernstein of Kiev, has become one of the latest victims of the Gulag. On December 11, he was sentenced to four years in a labor camp for resisting arrest according to Section 182 of the Ukrainian Code. The trial room was crowded with Ukrainians who yelled in one voice, "Beat the Jew." There were no defense witnesses.

Bernstein had been arrested on November 12 during a trip to Novograd-Volensk, where his aunt and uncle reside. The town manufactures tombstones and Bernstein's aunt had recently ordered a marker to place at Yosef's mother's grave. The aunt was anonymously denounced to police as a tombstone speculator and, on November 12th, Bernstein

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Reagan Attacks Soviets on Human Rights



President Reagan greeting Avital Shcharansky, wife of Soviet Refusenik Anatoly B. Shcharansky, at White House ceremony marking International Human Rights Day, December 10, 1984. Mr. Reagan said the Soviet Union was committing "brutal affronts to the human conscience" by suppressing freedom at home. See page 7 for excerpts from President Reagan's speech and Refusenik activities in the Soviet Union commemorating Human Rights Day.

NEWSBRIEFS

ALEXANDER KHOLMIANSKY has been on hunger strike since September 13 and he continues to be force-fed. The investigation has been extended until December 14th because of some "internal personal problems of the investigation administration department." The family asked about his health. At first, the medical department of the Estonian Republic responded that his health is satisfactory. Now they're saying that it's not life-threatening which means that his health is not good. It must be very poor. The attorney was to begin reading the trial at the beginning of the month but now it's been prolonged.

ALEXANDER was arrested on July 25th, while on holiday in Estonia. He was then given a summary sentence of ten days detention for a minor offense. He was not released after serving the set period. The police searched his home and in addition to confiscating Hebrew study books the police claimed that they found under a cupboard a gun and ammunition. The family immediately protested and stated emphatically that both were planted, and that KHOLMIANSKY was being detained solely because he dedicated all his free time to the study of Hebrew, and to the study of Jewish culture.

On Tuesday November 13th MR. and MRS. GRIGORY KHOLMIANSKY tried to deliver a food parcel and warm clothes to the prison in Tallinn. The food parcel was rejected by the guards, who said that ALEXANDER was "not eating anyway," and, therefore, "did not require warm clothes either."

On the same day, ALEXANDER's brother, MIKHAIL, was called on by three men at his place of work. One of them identified himself as ALEXANDER's investigator. The three tersely told MIKHAIL that they were well aware that he was the one who initiated the "loud campaign" abroad on behalf of his brother. They warned him that unless "all that" stopped, he too would be in trouble. PLEASE SEND LETTERS TO: Karl Kimmel, Chief Prosecutor, Mitchurina 7, 200001, Tallinn, Estonian SSR, USSR.

The investigation into the case of 53-year-old **MARK NEPOMNIASHCHY**, held in an Odessa prison for allegedly "Defaming the Soviet State" is continuing. The family has engaged a lawyer, MR. UMANSKY. He is the same lawyer who defended YAKOV LEVIN who, on November 19th, was sentenced to three years imprisonment on the same charge now facing the imprisoned MARK NEPOMNIASHCHY.

YACOV MESH is very seriously ill. The diagnosis of the local authorities is acute yellow atrophy of the liver. In addition, he appears to have hepatitis. He has lost 16 kilos (over 30 pounds) and his eyes and skin are yellow.

Mesh was beaten very hard during his arrest including blows to the head. Two weeks later, he had a very high temperature and for two weeks, he went without any medical help.

Preparations for his trial continue. PLEASE SEND MESSAGES ON HIS BEHALF TO: Sergei Burenkov, Soviet Minister of Health, The Soviet Embassy, 1 Andrei Sakharov Plaza, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Stress the fact that Mesh's entire family was given permission to leave in 1978. Now, especially considering the severity of his disease, would be a wonderful opportunity for the Soviets to act in a humanitarian fashion by granting him permission.

On 28th November, **INNA BEGUN**, the wife of the imprisoned **IOSIF BEGUN** was informed by an official at the Department of Health in charge of Labor colonies that her husband was examined by a doctor and that there was no cause for concern for his health. However, he also told her that IOSIF was punished for breaches of camp regulations and for refusing to work. "Perhaps BEGUN refused to work on the Sabbath?" — INNA asked. But the official declined to answer. He also refused to tell INNA whether IOSIF was still being held in the prison area of the camp.

NEWSBRIEFS

ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY has not been heard from for over three months; his last correspondence was written on September 5. According to authorities, he was taken out of Chistopol Prison on October 22nd, and moved to a labor camp. During the time of transportation, Anatoly's mother, Mrs. Ida Milgrom, tried to find out what camp he was being transferred to, and the status of his health, but authorities responded rudely.

Three weeks ago, a telegram was received from the head of Camp 35 stating that Anatoly had arrived there and was presently writing a letter. To date, no letter has arrived, and the meeting with relatives, scheduled upon his arrival, has not taken place.

Anatoly's brother, Leonide, said that "in light of these facts, and especially that we haven't heard from Anatoly in more than three months, we doubt the truthfulness of the authorities' information and are gravely concerned."

On January 20, 1985, Anatoly will be 36 years old. We encourage that messages of support be sent to his mother at: RSFSR, USSR, Lyubertsy Moscow Oblast, Ul. Moskovskaya Bld. 3A, Apt. 12, Mrs. Ida Milgrom.

EVGENY LEIN is still without work in his specialty. He has a PhD in mathematics but has been forced to do menial jobs. He appealed to the Bureau in Moscow which is responsible for finding employment. He was told to apply at the Institute for Aluminum and Magnesium, which expressed interest. After a meeting with the KGB, the Institute refused his employment based on a reduction of manpower. They told him, however, that if Lein could suggest someone else with his background, they would be interested in employing him. PLEASE SEND A LETTER OR TELEGRAM, immediately, to the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Moskva V-71, Leninsky Prospekt 14, Akademiya Nauk SSSR, attention: Academic Alexandrov; to protest Lein's exclusion from his field. Please urge Alexandrov to intervene to see that Evgeny be given adequate employment.

EVGENYA UTEVSKAYA, well-known Leningrad refusenik, was given permission and emigrated to Israel with her husband ALEXANDER YUBBOROVSKY, and their two children.

AVRAM MARKMAN and his family from Minsk were last month once again denied permission to emigrate to Israel. They have been refuseniks since 1976.

TV PROGRAM SHOWS LENINGRAD REFUSENIKS

The KGB campaign to demoralize the refusenik community in Leningrad took a further dramatic step forward this week when the local TV station showed at peak time a program naming names and showing pictures reminiscent of the notorious program "Traders in Souls", which appeared on the national network in January 1977.

The Leningrad program, which went out at 9:50 p.m. on Monday night, November 13th, was entitled "Hirelings and Accomplices". It was in two parts, the first dealing with dissidents, the second with "the International Zionists and the American Jewish capital assets which rule the U.S."

It purported to show how foreign Zionist centers, mainly American, used Leningrad refuseniks as part of their anti-Soviet campaign. Another commentator made the claim that "Zionist hirelings" within the Leningrad area were trying to persuade Jews to go to Israel so that they will become cannon fodder in new wars of expansion. Although the program did not, like "Traders in Souls" directly identify anyone as a traitor, it nevertheless made it clear that the people it showed were doing the work of anti-Soviet elements abroad. Among those screened (without their knowledge, incidentally) were: **LEV SHAPIRO; GRIGORY VASSERMAN; YAKOV GORODETSKY; YOSIF RADOMYSLSKY; ROALD (KNOWN AS ALEC) ZELICHONOK; LEONID KELBERT; YAKOV RABINOVICH; ABA TARATUTA; GRIGORY GEISHIS; EVGENY LEIN** (not confirmed—ed.)

Washington Talk

Budapest 1985: Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe

At a private meeting last week, Ambassador John Scanlan, U.S. Ambassador Designate to Poland, briefed UCSJ Advisory Board Chairperson, Lynn Singer, and Associate Director for Public Affairs, Bob Arsenault, on the upcoming Budapest cultural forum. The forum is one of 7 meetings agreed upon at the Madrid meeting of the CSCE, which concluded in 1983.

The United States, Canada, the Soviet Union and thirty-two European nations participate in the CSCE process, which was initiated with the signing of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. These specialized, or "experts", meetings, as they are known, deal with a variety of issues included in the Helsinki Final Act such as military security, cooperation in the Mediterranean, and human rights.

Ambassador Scanlan commented that "the United States has been fortunate to draw its cultural diversity and heritage from many nations — including, most prominently, the nations and cultures of all parts of Europe, North and South, West and East." He continued: "We are proud of that heritage as we are proud of the culture, values and ideals it has produced. It has taught us that governments cannot confine or dictate what culture should be — they can only provide the necessary freedom for culture to be as diverse and imaginative as creative people can make it."

Donald Bandler, Political/Military Officer in the State Department's Bureau of European Affairs, who represented the U.S. at the preliminary meetings to plan the Budapest forum, also participated in the briefing.

The meetings themselves will begin October 5, 1985.

Fradkova, Continued from p. 1
prospective employers that the Refuseniks applying are "over qualified for the job." They are thus forced to live on their savings, unable to earn a living in a country where unemployment, called "parasitism," is a punishable crime.

Nadia, as she is referred to by friends, applied to emigrate in 1978, but was denied. Her father's "access to state secrets" was cited as the reason, even though the two of them are almost total strangers.

In protest, she went on a hunger strike. It lasted 45 days. She was taken to a hospital and fed intravenously. "If Fradkova goes on a hunger strike again, we will put her in a mental hospital," Soviet authorities threatened.

Yet, she starved herself again, this time for 75 days. And the KGB kept its word. She was taken to Psychiatric Hospital #9 in Leningrad.

The psychological torture was terrible. Massive doses of drugs left her paralyzed and barely conscious. The doctor who injected her with powerful muscle relaxants unleashed a torrent of vicious anti-Semitic slurs against her, "Zionist whore! All you Jews are thieves!" he shouted.

When the authorities had had enough, Nadia was released. A few months ago, however, Nadia was again picked up by the police and taken to a psychiatric hospital.

She was placed in a ward with extremely violent patients. A commission was established to hear her case. After short deliberation, she was ruled "abnormal" because of her protests and refusal to adjust to "normal" Soviet life.

The KGB had succeeded. They had made Nadia an officially certified "psychiatric case."

Nadia returned home. But just weeks ago, she was picked up again.

UCSJ Expresses Solidarity with Victims of Apartheid

At a White House briefing on the occasion of Human Rights Day, December 10, 1984, UCSJ National President Morey Schapira spoke out on behalf of victims of Apartheid. "We are deeply concerned about violations of basic human rights wherever they occur," Schapira said. "The human rights community and freedom-loving people the world over must stand together to insure an end to such outrageous acts. The UCSJ wishes to take this opportunity to reaffirm our solidarity with those in South Africa who suffer from the oppression of Apartheid.

"In expressing our deep and profound concern over this policy, which denies basic and fundamental human freedoms to Blacks and people of color, we are reminded of the official oppression of Soviet Jews. The recent arrest and illegal detention of Hebrew teachers and religious activists is a sad parallel to the detention of labor leaders in South Africa, whose rights to free expression and fundamental human freedoms have been suppressed. We applaud the leadership of persons of conscience who seek to bring about constructive change for the troubled people of South Africa."

In speaking to representatives of the human rights community President Reagan emphasized a "moral responsibility to speak out on this matter [of Apartheid]." He further stated that "such brutal affronts to the human conscience as the systematic suppression of individual liberty in the Soviet Union, and the denial of religious expression by Christians, Jews, and Moslems in that country are tragic examples . . . Soviet Jewry is again being exposed to a systematic anti-Semitic campaign." (See related story, page 1.)

She was taken to the same mental hospital and then transferred to Psychiatric Hospital #5—a psycho-prison with no visitation rights.

Earlier this year the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews launched an emergency campaign on Nadia's behalf. The UCSJ alerted the American Psychiatric Association to coordinate efforts with their counterparts around the world. In addition, UCSJ organized an international campaign to inundate the Soviet Minister of Health with mailgrams and postcards protesting this perverse use of psychiatry.

In light of this new development, UCSJ is encouraging that pressure be exerted to rectify this injustice. LETTERS OF PROTEST SHOULD BE SENT TO:

General Procurator of the USSR
Alexander Rekunkov
Pushkinskaya 15A
Moscow, RSFSR, USSR

ALERT

On Capitol Hill

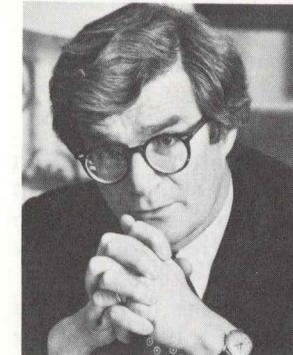


UCSJ Congressional Call To Conscience

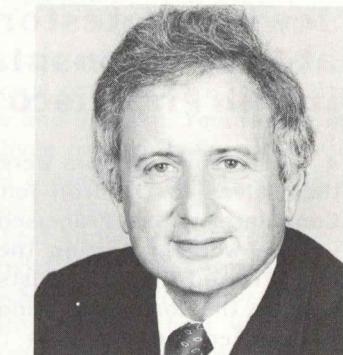
Senator Rudy Boschwitz (R-MN) and Representative Sander Levin (D-MI) will lead the UCSJ's Congressional Call to Conscience when the 99th Congress convenes. The Call to Conscience, which began in 1976, is the best known mechanism for members of Congress to speak out on behalf of individual refusenik families. Each week throughout the 99th Congress, statements regarding specific Soviet Jewry cases will be inserted in the Congressional Record by members who have adopted an individual or family.

Senator Boschwitz, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee who was just reelected to a second term, said: "Not only is this a call to conscience for people of good will, it is a reminder to the Soviets that the U.S. Congress is steadfast in its commitment to human rights for Soviet Jews. The Call to Conscience enables members of Congress to record officially hundreds of cases in the Soviet Union; we have been consistently able to bring attention to the Soviets' gross violations of the Helsinki Accords."

Congressman Levin, who will begin his second term



Senator Boschwitz (R-MN)



Representative Levin (D-MI)

representing Michigan's 17th district, noted: "The Congressional Call to Conscience for Soviet Jews is now an essential ingredient in the world-wide effort to aid Soviet Jewry. What we in the West (particularly members of Congress) can do is to bear witness for these victims. If their own government will not hear them, the rest of the world will."

Jerusalem Soviet Jewry Spokesmen Meets with Congress

Yuri Shtern, spokesman for the Soviet Jewry Education and Research Center in Jerusalem, met with several members of Congress and government officials during a recent trip to Washington, D.C.

In a meeting with Congressman Bob Lagomarsino (R-CA) and Ben Gilman (R-NY), Shtern described the recent harsh crackdown against Hebrew teachers and religious activists in the Soviet Union. "The Jews in the Soviet Union are at a very critical place right now," Shtern said. "It is important for influential U.S. European policymakers to speak out against these outrageous acts."

In response to Shtern's remarks, Congressman Lagomarsino noted, "Our meeting pointed to the need for increased Congressional attention to the tragic plight of Soviet Jews. Our discussions concluded with an agreement on the need for increased U.S. action in the Interparliamentary Group for Human Rights in the Soviet Union (IPG) and on the need for continued pressure in all bilateral and multilateral discussions, including arms control, on the topic of inhuman treatment of Jews, Christians, and other persecuted peoples in the Soviet Union. We should call the Soviets to task for mail interference and examine critically their failure to implement key provisions of the Helsinki Accords."

Congressman Gilman said, "I was deeply privileged to have met with Yuri Shtern, who presented vivid witness to the violations of human rights by the Soviets. His recounting of the wave of Soviet anti-Semitism discredits the Soviet contention that all Jews who wished to emigrate have already done so. Yuri Shtern and

other activists who were fortunate enough to escape, are living reminders of what we must do to end the gross violations of human rights taking place today behind the Iron Curtain."

Congressman Gilman is in the forefront of efforts to improve Soviet compliance with International Postal Agreements and attended the International Postal Meeting in Hamburg in July, 1984. He is the author of H. Con. Res. 294, which demands an end to Soviet interference with international mail operations.

Shtern, who was born in Moscow in 1949, graduated from Moscow State University with a degree in economics. He became active in Jewish affairs in 1978 helping to organize the first Jewish kindergarten (gan), as well as seminars on Israel and demonstrations. Shtern circulated petitions on Jewish rights and was instrumental in drafting the "Big Letter" on the conditions of Jews in the USSR in February, 1981. Two months later, he immigrated to Israel and now manages a settlement in Judea.



Congressmen Lagomarsino (l.) and Gilman (r.) discuss cultural genocide and a new wave of Soviet anti-Semitism with Shtern.

Action **ALERT**

From Local Councils

Jewish Protestors Arrested at Soviet Consulate in San Francisco

• Four demonstrators were arrested after handcuffing themselves to the iron fence surrounding the Soviet Consulate in San Francisco. The two rabbis and two women were protesting the recent arrests of Hebrew teachers and Jewish activists in the Soviet Union.

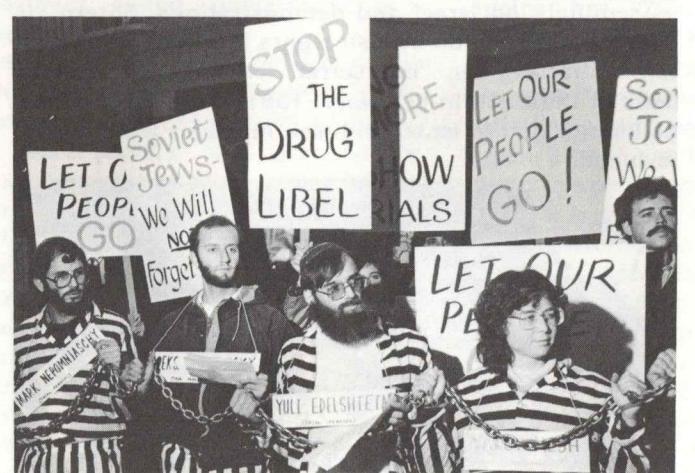
While the four were handcuffed to the iron gate, a voice over the intercom from within the consulate building was heard by reporters to say: "Shalom, you Jewish scum. Go home!"

Across the street from the consulate, 50 placard-waving demonstrators chanted Hebrew songs and demanded that Soviet Jews be allowed to emigrate. Nine in the crowd, wearing striped prison uniforms, were chained to one another. Around their necks were signs with the names of the recently arrested Hebrew teachers: Alexander Kholmiansky, Yuli Edelshtein, Yakov Levin, and Mark Nepomniashchy. The name of Soviet Jewish activist Yakov Mesh, who was also recently arrested, was around the neck of another demonstrator.

Those arrested were Rabbi Ari Cartun, director of Hillel at Stanford University; Rabbi Sheldon Lewis of Congregation Kol Emeth in Palo Alto; Kathy Cytron, program director of Hillel at University of California at Berkeley; and Joy Asfeld of Stanford Hillel.

The demonstration was organized by B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations of Stanford University, U.C. Berkeley, San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, and U.C. Santa Cruz, **Bay Area Council for Soviet Jews**, and the Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco.

Photo Credit: Ira Nowinski

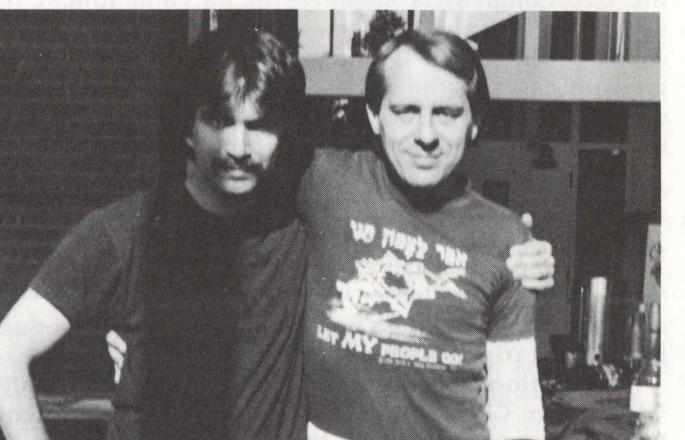


Protestors at Soviet Consulate in San Francisco.

Nine-Mile Walk for Soviet Jews

• A Nine-Mile Walk for Soviet Jews was recently co-sponsored by **Seattle Action for Soviet Jewry** and the Freedom Fund, a Seattle-based group that raises funds for international human rights and refugee organizations. Alan Weiner, founder and director of the Freedom Fund, plans to make this an annual event.

The Walk was held to promote community interest in the plight of Soviet Jews. Participants obtained pledges from sponsors for each mile walked on the nine-mile route through Seattle's North End. The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews will be the recipient of funds raised by the walk.



Eric Liebman, left, from Bellingham, and Rev. Terry Patterson, right, Board Member of the Freedom Fund, before the start of the Walk for Soviet Jews.

Boxers Fight for Yakov Mesh

• Dr. Joel Levin, a plastic surgeon from Kendall, fought a two-round exhibition boxing match against one of the world's finest pros, Hector "Macho" Camacho, on December 15, at the Miami Beach Convention Center. The fight was organized by the **South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry** to publicize the plight of Yakov Mesh, a former boxer in the Soviet Army who has been imprisoned and maltreated for his desire to emigrate to Israel with his wife and son. A sellout crowd of close to 5,000, including Mesh's parents, witnessed the fight which was part of the evening's "big league" boxing card.

Florida Gov. Bob Graham, the entire state congressional delegation and both U.S. Senators have sent letters of support and Levin is starting a petition on Mesh's behalf to be signed by the country's most famous athletes. The first two signatures were World Boxing Association bantamweight champion Richie Sandoval, who fought Saturday night at the Convention Center, and Camacho.

International Human Rights Day, December 10, 1984

United States

... Let us always remember the critical moral distinction of our time — the clear difference between a philosophy of government that acknowledges wrongdoing and injustice and one that refuses to admit to such injustices, and even justifies its own assaults on individual liberty in the name of a Chimeric utopian vision. Such brutal affronts to the human conscience as the systematic suppression of individual liberty in the Soviet Union, and the denial of religious expression by Christians, Jews, and Muslims in that country, are tragic examples.

Today, for example, the largest remaining Jewish community in Europe, Soviet Jewry, is again being exposed to a systematic anti-Semitic campaign. Omnipotently, teachers of the Hebrew language have been arrested and their efforts to preserve their culture and religion treated as a crime.

Soviet authorities are continuing to threaten many "refuseniks" with confinement in psychiatric hospitals, expulsion from their jobs, and internal exile. Yet thousands of Soviet Jews have applied for permission to emigrate. We have, and shall continue to insist, that those who wish to leave must be allowed to do so.

Our heart also goes out today to an individual who has worked so hard for human rights progress in the

Soviet Union and suffered so much for his efforts — the Nobel Prize Laureate, Dr. Andrei Sakharov. Nothing more clearly illustrates the absence of what our Founding Fathers called a "decent respect to the opinions of mankind" than the cruel treatment of this great humanitarian.

The Soviet Union, itself, would do much to regain respect within the international community if it would allow academician Sakharov and his wife, Yelena Bonner, to live the rest of their lives in dignity in a place of their own choosing. We're pleased to have the Sakharovs' son-in-law here with us today.

The Sakharovs are the best-known victims of human rights violations in the Soviet Union. But thousands of other Soviet citizens, such as Uri Orlov, or Anatoly Shcharansky — whose wife, Avital, is here with us today — suffer in Soviet prisons and labor camps for the sole crimes of expressing a personal opinion, seeking to emigrate, or openly expressing their love of God . . .

... So today, we, the people of the United States, in conjunction with other freedom loving people everywhere in the world, rededicate ourselves to the cause of human rights, to the cause of democratic self-rule and human freedom....

(Excerpts from President Reagan)

open to the public.

3. Before and after trial, in prison and out, Jews are systematically beaten, harassed, humiliated and everything is done to break them physically and morally.

4. Jewish citizens do not have the same rights as other citizens in the Soviet Union as far as party officials, supervisors and prosecutors are concerned. They are not treated as every other citizen when it comes to protection of Jewish citizens under the law.

In view of the above, we demand that a committee be organized immediately to investigate all the cases against Jews whose only real crime is their petitioning for repatriation to the State of Israel. In this committee, we demand to cooperate our representatives and representatives of prisoners of Zion. The target of the committee should be:

1. Investigate the conditions of all Jews in prison before or after trial. From our information, their condition is very serious. This is really a matter of life and death for them.

2. Review all the cases in court and those that have already been sent to prison.

3. Demand that the Soviet procurator, the prosecution, receives all the information collected on KGB and MSB on the violation of Soviet law when prosecuting or repressing Jews for one reason only, their petitioning for repatriation. The persons are Shcharansky, Begun, Abramov, Zunshain, Levin, Kholmiansky, Edelshtein, Mesh, Nepomniashchy, Bernshtain, Fradkova. The KGB and MSB should stand on trial for their actions, to make all this information known to the general public and to allow the committee to publicize its actions through the mass media.

Levin, *Continued from p. 1*

Jewish activists from the city and Leningrad stood by, singing *Kachol V'Lavan* ('The Blue and the White'), written a decade and a half ago by a Baltic Jew yearning to reach Israel. The authorities packed the courtroom with students brought for this purpose, telling Levin's friends there was room only for his parents, whom the police had previously pressured to denounce their son. A Soviet television crew and a local reporter for *Flag of Communism* were also present, according to the SSSJ.

Levin told the court he would not cooperate if his fiancee were denied entry; 40 minutes later she was brought in. He declared, in answer to questions, that he was being tried for his views. On the witness stand, colleagues from work refused to say that Levin engaged in anti-Soviet propaganda.

The next day the trial resumed, and Yehudit Nepomniashchy was forbidden entry to the court. The prosecutor produced one Tishkovsky, who said he had known Levin for two years and who is presently an investigator for the prosecutor's office. Levin, he claimed, defamed the Soviet state and gave him books and newspapers. The judge responded that the accusation was so severe Levin might have to be tried for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda".

Meanwhile, Leningrad activists Mikhail Tzyvin, Boris Yelchin and Polina Gorodetsky stood outside the courthouse, the SSSJ reported. Tzyvin walked away for a smoke, and was immediately arrested, then sentenced to 15 days.

After a weekend break, the trial resumed on the 19th. Two hostile witnesses were paraded before the court, one Bogushovsky and a 20 year-old woman named Zhukova.

Zhukova said she had brought Zionist material given her by Levin such as Leon Uris' *Exodus* and the magazine *Israel Today* to the KGB.

The day after, the sentence — "obviously pre-determined by the KGB," the SSSJ stated — was given. To make the lesson clear, Levin's supporters from Odessa, Moscow and Leningrad were now allowed in the court, which also pointedly contained police agents from the KGB's Jewish section. "Three years for 'anti-Soviet slander,'" the judge in-

toned, adding it was distributing "defamatory" material such as Zeev Jabotinsky's satirical writings, *Exodus*, and information about Israel. He accused Levin of participating in a Purim play where a dog was dressed up as a policeman, and Levin played the role of Odessa's KGB chief. Levin's attorney, Umansky, had previously denied many of these accusations, and had pointed out that the late Jabotinsky wrote the cited before the Russian Revolution!

Levin was permitted his final words. He repeated that he had been tried for his beliefs rather than his deeds, and denied any guilt. He then asked his parents' forgiveness for the suffering brought upon them.

"A blindfolded and gagged Soviet 'justice' whose scales have been knocked askew now stumbles to the next series of trials of unofficial Jewish educators," the SSSJ declared. The wife of Odessa's Yakov Mesh, who was beaten by 10 policemen and arrested on October 16th, journeyed to Moscow to hand a document to the Prosecutor-General's office refuting the charges of "refusing to testify against Levin" and "resisting the police" against him.

The parents of Moscow Prisoner of Conscience Alexander Kholmiansky, arrested in July for "gun and bullets possession", were awakened at 6:30 a.m. by the KGB and taken for an interrogation. They were threatened that if they did not cease speaking out their other son Mikhail, also an unofficial Jewish teacher, would be arrested. To drive the point home, Mikhail was taken by three men to the KGB. As his parents, he refused to give testimony, and was warned to stop his protests for his brother or face consequences.

Uncowed by these threats, Alexander Kholmiansky's parents, brother and sister-in-law joined the wife of fellow imprisoned educator Yuli Edelshtein to send an appeal in Hebrew to "the Israeli Knesset and the people of Israel" to "help Kholmiansky and Edelshtein the way Israel takes care of all its citizens in danger. We battle for them, but to succeed in such a difficult struggle a united effort of all Jews is necessary. We take this opportunity to thank our friends in Israel and the Diaspora for all they have done. Special thanks to our friends in the

Protest Continues Against New Soviet Laws

Over the past year, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR has enacted a number of new laws which seriously restrict contact with foreigners and tighten control over political prisoners. Their enactment has coincided with a severe cutback in emigration and the renewal of anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic propaganda in the Soviet media.

These developments are alarming not only because they are obviously intended to put a clamp on the Soviet human rights and Jewish emigration movements but also because many aspects of the new laws are in direct conflict with international human rights agreements that the Soviet Union has ratified. The Soviet Constitution, Article 29 (1977), provides that where Soviet domestic law conflicts with international treaties signed by the USSR and "generally recognized principles and rules of international law," the domestic law falls in favor of international law. (See also Article 129, Fundamental Principles of Civil Legislation of the USSR).

The parents of Moscow Prisoner of Conscience Alexander Kholmiansky, arrested in July for "gun and bullets possession", were awakened at 6:30 a.m. by the KGB and taken for an interrogation. They were threatened that if they did not cease speaking out their other son Mikhail, also an unofficial Jewish teacher, would be arrested. To drive the point home, Mikhail was taken by three men to the KGB. As his parents, he refused to give testimony, and was warned to stop his protests for his brother or face consequences.

Uncowed by these threats, Alexander Kholmiansky's parents, brother and sister-in-law joined the wife of fellow imprisoned educator Yuli Edelshtein to send an appeal in Hebrew to "the Israeli Knesset and the people of Israel" to "help Kholmiansky and Edelshtein the way Israel takes care of all its citizens in danger. We battle for them, but to succeed in such a difficult struggle a united effort of all Jews is necessary. We take this opportunity to thank our friends in Israel and the Diaspora for all they have done. Special thanks to our friends in the

USSR who are helping us despite the personal danger."

According to the SSSJ, 220 Jewish activists in 13 cities across the USSR have now joined the mass hunger strike for the release of the unofficial educators Levin, Mesh, Kholmiansky, Edelshtein and Levin's future father-in-law Mark Nepomniashchy.

Bernstein, *Continued from p. 1*

journeyed to her town with documents proving the marker's proper purchase. The family now believes that this denunciation may well have been a KGB plot to lure him to her remote town for his arrest.

That evening, on his way to the bus station to return to Kiev, Bernstein was detained by three policemen to a stationhouse for interrogation. Only three days later the authorities notified his family that he was being held for "resisting arrest," with a possible five-year sentence. Although a diabetic, Bernstein was not allowed to receive food from his family.

Bernstein's 24 year-old daughter, Yana, went to Moscow to hand in a complaint to the Prosecutor General's office, which sent the document to the same local prosecutor in Novograd-Volensk who had originally ordered Bernstein's arrest. It protested that the arrest warrant was dated November 13, the day after Bernstein was actually taken by the police. The prosecutor's permit for the detention was dated November 16. Bernstein's wife, Fanya, believes that the police were in a hurry to arrest Yosef and therefore did not pay attention to legal procedures. That opinion was expressed during a radio broadcast to the West in which she indicated that the charge against Yosef was a provocation of the KGB. The prosecutor has threatened Fanya that after Yosef's trial, she will be charged for participating in the broadcast.

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews is calling for letters of protest to be sent to:



Yosef and Fanya Bernstein

Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR
Yakimenko A.N.
UL: Chekistov 4, Kiev, UKR.SSR

Minister of Justice of the Ukrainian SSR
Zaichuk V.I.
UL: Kotsiubinskogo 12, Kiev, UKR.SSR.

First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party
Shcherbivsky Valdinir Vasilievich
UL. Ordzhonikidze 11, Kiev, UKR.SSR.

USSR Minister of Justice
Kravtsov Boris Vasilievich
UL. obukhka 4, Moscow 129028,
tel: 206-05-54



Tatiana Edelshtein (r.) wife of Yuli Edelshtein and Ilana Kholmiansky (l.) sister-in-law of Alexander Kholmiansky.

their cultural and religious heritage. In the Soviet Union, there are under 60 synagogues for 2½ million Jews; the teaching of Hebrew, Judaica, or any kind of religious text is strictly prohibited; and no printing of a Hebrew bible or prayerbook has been authorized.

The recent arrests and harsh sentences reflect a continuing crackdown on Jewish study groups and their teachers. The latest Refusenik Hebrew teacher to be arrested is Dan Shapiro of Moscow who, while awaiting the Edelshtein verdict, was charged with assaulting a police officer outside the court building. Shapiro's home had previously been raided and religious items confiscated by the KGB who claimed that they were looking for "drugs."

Soviet Scientists' Paper Read in Absentia

The First World Conference on Virus Diseases and Mental Health, which met in Montreal, Canada, in November, was marred by the absence of Soviet epidemiologist Lev Goldfarb. Authorities in the USSR have refused Dr. Goldfarb permission to emigrate for the past five years. They have now kept him from attending this conference and presenting his paper. In support of Goldfarb, 80% of the conferees petitioned Soviet authorities.

This is the third time in the past three months that papers by Soviet scientists denied emigration had to be presented in absentia at international scientific meetings in Canada. In September, still another paper by Lev Goldfarb was presented for him in Calgary; in August, a paper by cyberneticist Viktor Brailovsky was presented for him in Montreal. Under normal circumstances, only sickness or an unforeseen emergency prevents a scholar from presenting a paper in person.

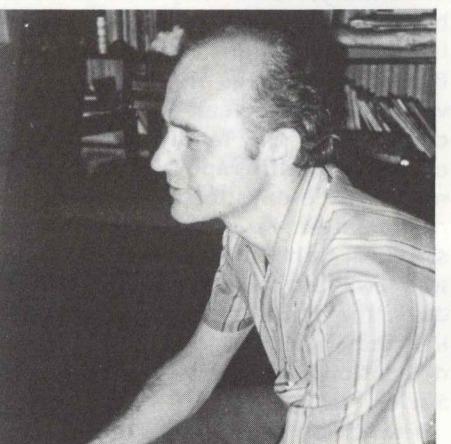
Dr. Goldfarb's current paper, "Chronic Brain Syndrome in Vilyuisk Encephalomyelitis Patients," was read by Dr. Hyman Tannenbaum, Director of the Division of Rheumatology of the Department of Medicine at Montreal General Hospital in Quebec. Tannenbaum, who had met Goldfarb during a visit to Moscow in 1983, first read a poignant letter from the Russian.

"Although I am not permitted now to work in scientific institutions," he wrote, "I try to continue studies in my field." Stressing that his enforced isolation precludes "any possibility to discuss my results with colleagues," he stated that he would "like other specialists to know and evaluate" his work. Because he recognized that his "cherished wish" to participate personally in the conference would probably not be realized, he humbly declared, "I would be extremely grateful for all help the conference can give."

Tannenbaum then introduced Goldfarb's work with a brief sketch of the background and current status of this internationally recognized expert on tic-borne encephalitis. He explained that Dr. Goldfarb first ran afoul of the authorities

when he applied for permission to immigrate to Israel in 1979. At that time, Goldfarb had published 90 research papers and was employed as a senior scientist at the Moscow Institute of Poliomyelitis and Viral Encephalitis, where he had conducted research for twenty years.

His application was denied on grounds that he had engaged in secret work. Tannenbaum refuted this claim, however, stating that all Goldfarb's findings had been published in open scientific journals. Undeniably, Goldfarb's emigration application led to his demotion to a position as a lab technician at half-pay and to his subsequent dismissal. Since 1981, he has been restricted to working one day a week at a clinic.



Refusenik Scientist Lev Goldfarb

plishments and dedication to medicine, he contrasted the Russian's former productivity with the current involuntary lull in his career.

Moved by Goldfarb's plight, most of the conferees signed petitions to Soviet authorities on his behalf. Addressing the president of the Academy of Medical Sciences of the USSR and the chief of the Moscow Office of Visas and Immigration Registration, the petitioners noted that "improvement in the quality of life hinges on research conducted freely by specialists all over the world." They called on these officials to grant Goldfarb an exist visa "so that he can resume his career and again contribute in accordance with his full potential to scientific progress."

Dr. Tannenbaum telephoned the New York City offices of the Committee of Concerned Scientists (CCS) to report on the responsiveness of the Montreal conferees to Goldfarb's situation. He lauded them for speaking out against the Soviet Government's "interference with the free flow of people and ideas." The CCS is an independent organization of 4,000 American scientists dedicated to the protection and advancement of the human rights and scientific freedom of colleagues worldwide.

U.S. Chemists Protest Soviet Chemist's Plight

A petition protesting harsh treatment of imprisoned Soviet chemist Yuri Tarnopolsky has been sent to Soviet officials by participants at the American Chemical Society's national meeting in Philadelphia. Tarnopolsky, 48, was sentenced in June 1983 to three years in a labor camp for "defaming the Soviet state." His plight has drawn protests from ACS and other scientific groups. Organized by the Committee of Concerned Scientists and signed by about 200 participants in two days, the petition notes that Tarnopolsky has chronic heart and gallbladder ailments.

Unable to meet quotas for strenuous mining work, he has been put in punishment cells twice this year. The petition appeals for early release on humanitarian grounds and asks that he be assigned work suitable to his condition in the meantime.

Soviet Jews Face Ritual Libel Charges

By Betsy Gidwitz

It is said that allegations of Jewish ritual murder were cited by Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of Syria in the days of the Hasmoneans, to justify the profanation of the Temple. Thus it is said that in the festival of Chanukah one may find the origin of blood libel charges — the accusation that Jews murder non-Jews for religious reasons — that have leapt over time and space, recurring in one country, then another, in one century, then in the next.

Such allegations were commonplace in the Middle Ages and early modern period. Accompanied by inflammatory rhetoric, they led to countless trials and massacres. More than 150 cases are recorded between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries in various parts of Europe; a blood libel even forms the basis of one of the principal stories in *The Canterbury Tales* (c. 1390), the major work of Geoffrey Chaucer.

Nazi propagandists were prolific in their exploitation of ritual murder charges; numerous old allegations were revived and investigations reopened in the various territories under their control. In the modern era, however, it has been Russia and the Soviet Union where blood libel accusations have occurred over the longest period of time. The trial of Mendel Beilis, in Kiev, attracted worldwide attention in 1913; not



Betsy Gidwitz is a Soviet area specialist at MIT and on the Board of Directors of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

withstanding his acquittal and the 1917 revolution, such charges have been repeated in the Soviet Union in the post-World War II era. Their broad geographic range indicative of central direction, blood libel accusations appeared in the state-controlled press during the early 1960's in such widely separated areas as Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Lithuania.

The Soviet media endorsement of ritual murder charges in the 1960's was silenced by international protest and has not been repeated. In its place, Soviet authorities have created new forms of ritual libel and new formats for expression of the more traditional libel accusations. Among the former is the emergence of a drug libel, the charge that Jews use narcotics in their religious observance. Searching the apartments of activist Jews in September, Moscow authorities planted and then "found" a narcotics-like substance in the flat of Yuli Edelshtein, an servant Jew and unofficial Hebrew teacher. Edelshtein subsequently was arrested and is now awaiting trial. "It is a well-known fact," said one police agent involved in the case, "that Jews use narcotics in their religious ritual." An investigator later told Mrs. Edelshtein that Jewish tourists from the West were smuggling drugs into the USSR so that they and Soviet Jews could use them together in ritual observance.

Moscow agents also entered the home of two other Jewish activists, each time announcing that they expected to find narcotics. In one home, only the vigilance of the activist's children prevented the planting and later "discovery" of drugs by the authorities. In the other apartment, police confiscated a mezuzah and tefillin, claiming that narcotics for ritual use might be secreted inside.

The effort by Soviet authorities to identify use of narcotics with Jewish religious practice is intended to discredit and to quell the revival of traditional Judaism that is stirring among many young Soviet Jews to-

day. The proposed victims are all activists in underground Jewish education — underground because the Jewish heritage cannot be transmitted openly from one generation to the next in the Soviet Union. And although the adverse impact on this particular group of Soviet Jews is likely to be especially harsh, it is probable that, over time, drug abuse will come to be associated with other Soviet Jews as well.

If authorities in the USSR have been careful to transform ancient blood libel charges into accusations with contemporary relevance, they have also repeated a related, hoary anti-Semitic libel in its original form — but in a new format. A recent cartoon in the government newspaper *Izvestia* (September 21, 1984) shows an ugly, brutish-looking Israeli soldier standing over a well in southern Lebanon, pouring matter into it from a container labeled "poisonous substances" and bearing a skull and crossbones. (See page 12).

In common with blood libel charges, the most frequent incidence of well-poisoning accusations occurred during the Middle Ages. The black plague that swept Europe in the fourteenth century was often attributed to Jews who purportedly poisoned wells (and the air) in a massive conspiracy to murder all Christians. This allegation, too, rapidly gained currency in Russia. In 1550, Ivan the Terrible rejected a suggestion that Jewish merchants be permitted to reside and work in Moscow so that the local economy might be invigorated. Recalling the well-poisoning charge (and anticipating contemporary concerns), he asserted that Jews would "introduce poisonous drugs into our state."

Although the *Izvestia* cartoon refers only to Israeli troops in southern Lebanon, the anti-Semitic caricature of the Israeli soldier and the traditional imputation of well-poisoning to Jews have a broad anti-Semitic character fully consonant with the current Soviet anti-Jewish campaign. In common with the specific drug abuse allegations filed against Jewish activists in Moscow, the charge of Israeli well-poisoning is likely to be transformed in the minds of many Soviet citizens to an attack on all Jews, including those in the USSR.

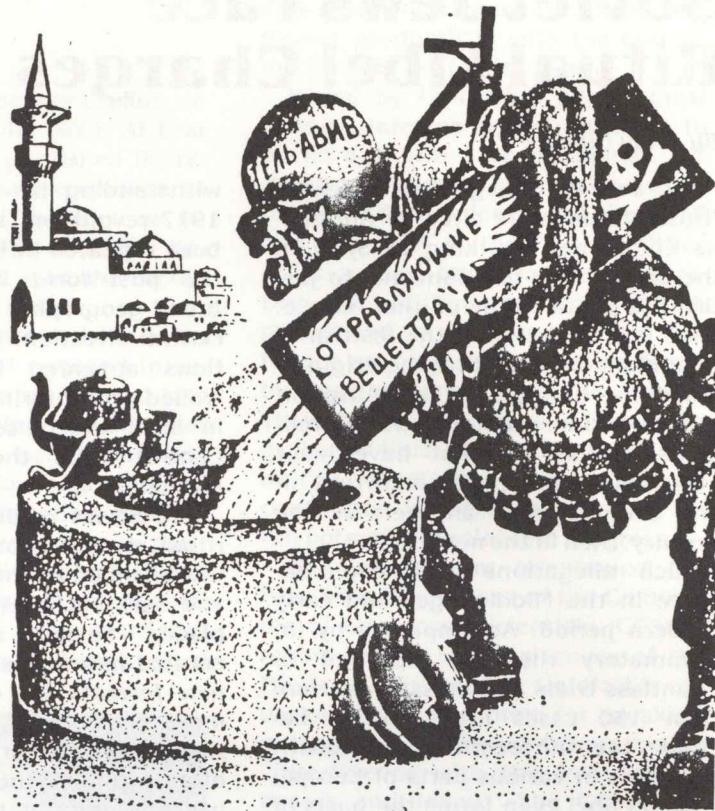
Continued on page 12

Libel Charges, Continued from page 11

Both accusations recall the Soviet anti-Semitic drive of the early 1960's. A spate of stories in the Soviet press recounted purported furtive meetings of Jews in synagogues for the purpose of consummating illegal financial transactions. Not only did such allegations repeat old anti-Semitic charges about money-lending and speculation, they also provided Soviet authorities with a public rationale for further anti-Semitic action during the same period. Several hundred Soviet synagogues were closed, in large part due to the "illegal economic activity" conducted on their premises, and a disproportionately high number of Jews were convicted of "economic crimes" in trials conducted in 25 Soviet cities. More than fifty percent of those sentenced to death were Jews.

The contemporary Soviet ritual libel charges malign the Jewish faith and the Jewish people; they cannot be explained away as anti-Zionism. Whether they portend large-scale persecution of Soviet Jews cannot be predicted, but the previous Soviet record does not provide cause for optimism. It behooves every Jew who lives in freedom to extend support to Soviet Jews in this time of trial and to inform USSR authorities that Soviet actions are intolerable. If Judah Maccabee performed a great miracle two thousand years ago, contemporary Jews must undertake a more prosaic, but also urgent, task on the eve of the twenty-first century.

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Israeli invaders poisoned wells with drinking water in South Lebanon (from newspapers). Helmet: Tel Aviv. Holding: Poisonous substances.



UNION OF COUNCILS FOR SOVIET JEWS
1411 K STREET, NW, SUITE 402
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

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The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews is composed of 37 local councils, 3 domestic affiliates, 3 international affiliates and 55,000 individual members dedicated to helping Soviet Jews, especially those desiring to emigrate.

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55 Jews left the Soviet Union in November