



# UCSJ QUARTERLY REPORT

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Pamela Braun Cohen, Yuri Orlov, and Natan Sharansky greet one another prior to testimony.

## UCSJ HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Quoting Andrei Sakharov's observation that "Our only protection against abuse is the spotlight of public opinion and the involvement of our friends around the world," Senator William Armstrong of Colorado convened the first of a series of UCSJ Commissions of Inquiry intended to focus attention on Soviet practices in the field of human rights.

Despite difficult weather conditions, the event was held as scheduled in the Russell Senate Office Building Caucus Room on January 23. And true to its stated purpose, the Commission examined current Soviet rhetoric that the Soviet state is a liberal, open society.

Also subjected to close scrutiny were the "new" Soviet concerns for human rights and the newly implemented Soviet policies which the Soviets falsely claim speed up and simplify the emigration process.

The testimony began shortly after 10 a.m. with an opening statement by former Prisoner-of-Conscience Dr. Yuri Orlov, in which he called for a "more practical approach to developments in the human rights area."

In discussing such an approach, Dr. Orlov said that the Jackson-Vanik Amendment "was adopted in a certain

situation and that situation has not changed. Therefore, I do not see any need to change the amendment. First, improvements in emigration policies, second, the easing of trade restrictions. But not the other way around."

Orlov was followed by former Prisoner-of-Conscience Natan Sharansky, who delivered a powerful summary of the current Soviet Jewry situation. He concluded by urging that the public be cautious "not to be deceived by one, two or three good gestures and at the same time ignore those messages which the Soviet Union sends the Jews who want to emigrate."

Referring specifically to the new Soviet emigration policy that took effect on January 1, Sharansky stated that the law "excludes more than 90 percent of those Jews who have already expressed the desire to leave the Soviet Union from this process. They are asking for help. They are saying that this is the most dangerous anti-emigration step ever undertaken in the Soviet Union since the beginning of emigration."

Sharansky noted, "The Soviets will try to get everything they want from the West, to cancel all the restrictions, to cancel the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, to get access to state-of-the-art technology and so on. It shouldn't be a ping-pong game, when the Soviet Union releases one dissident, then America cancels their restrictions, then the Soviet Union will make one more gesture."

## *THANKS TO OUR MEMBERS—without whose support this commission would not have been possible.*

Serving with Senator Armstrong as Commissioners were Senator Charles Grassley of Iowa, Former Senator Richard Stone of Florida and Mr. Stuart Eisenstat, former domestic policy aide to President Carter. All freely participated in the proceedings by directly questioning the witnesses on specific topics including Soviet anti-Semitism, evidence of Jewish cultural genocide and the public relations abilities of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Sharansky and Orlov responded by detailing their first-hand experiences with the Soviet judiciary and penal systems, and offered further insight into the diplomatic, social and political differences between the Soviet Union and the United States.

The all-day meeting received wide press and television coverage, including correspondents from all major net-

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## MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Pamela Braun Cohen

This is my first opportunity to speak to you in the Quarterly Report since I was elected president of UCSJ. And the first thing I want to do is to tell you how much you are appreciated. The 100,000 members of the UCSJ—and you personally—provide the Jewish resistance movement in the Soviet Union with hope. You empower the Refuseniks, and UCSJ, through your active witness and commitment.

Elie Wiesel has spoken eloquently from his own experience about the need of all who are oppressed, imprisoned and exiled to know that others in the free world have the courage to care. They live on this knowledge. Your personal involvement, through UCSJ, lets every Soviet Jew and their Soviet jailers know there are people watching their every move. People who are committed to their rescue and freedom. That is why every Refusenik is so thankful for you and the action you take on their behalf through UCSJ.

This is especially true today when our action is more crucial than ever before. Because today, we are entering a period of maximum danger for the 400,000 Soviet Jews who desperately desire to emigrate to Israel or the West.

And, ironically, it is also a period of maximum opportunity for the Soviet Jewry movement, but only if we understand the subtle changes now taking place in the Soviet Union.

Historically, Soviet national policy has refused to allow free and open travel or emigration for any of its citizens. And the Soviets rigidly cling to this policy unless they have powerful incentives to build favor with the United States. At those times, emigration is permitted for certain minority groups—especially Jews.

In other words, as far as the Soviets are concerned, Jews are for sale. Jews are capital the Soviets will spend as needed. And low emigration figures prove that the Soviets will always charge as much as possible.

In 1979, the Soviets allowed 52,000 Jews to emigrate and only 1,000 or so were freed each year since. Then, this year, the numbers began to climb until monthly averages rose to more than 500. And the numbers started their increase only because the Soviets sense that the U.S. may be willing to enter into arms and trade agreements the Soviets desperately need.

For a number of economic and security reasons, the USSR is in precisely the kind of vulnerable position that has always led to human rights concessions to the United States. And with Secretary of State George Shultz so strongly advocating human rights as an integral part of American foreign policy, the United States has never been in a stronger bargaining position.

This is the time for us to act together in strength. This is a time we can seize the moment through our carefully selected goals and policies.

There is no space here for a detailed discussion of the issues—that will be undertaken in a future issue of the

Quarterly Report. But there are some points I would like you to keep in mind.

First, it's important to note that even though emigration numbers are slightly up just now, the process for approving future emigration is systematically being closed down.

Thousands of Refuseniks are now being refused on charges that they or their family members allegedly possess national secrets. Others are denied because a member—often a remote member—of their family has not released them from financial support claims. And with the adoption of a new emigration code this past January, restrictions placed on emigration for the purpose of family reunification mean that if a Refusenik doesn't have immediate family already residing in Israel, he/she can't even apply.

Virtually no new emigration applications are being accepted. And it won't be long before the Soviets will claim that Jews no longer wish to leave. This is why we urgently need to redefine the rights of all Soviet Jews to emigrate in terms of internationally accepted norms. We must stop playing by the Soviets' unacceptable rules.

Second, we must always bear in mind that the single highest priority for the Soviet Jewry movement is to achieve the highest sustained level of emigration possible.

We must work for the freedom of all Jews wishing to leave the Soviet Union whether repatriation to Israel or reunification with their family somewhere else is desired. We must never accept "national security" or "regime considerations" or any other political catch-all as grounds for refusal.

While we support efforts to encourage Soviet Jews to freely choose Israel, we must not violate the right of free choice for individuals seeking emigration to the United States or other Western countries. The Secretary of State must be encouraged to press for acceptance of direct invitations by divided family members in the U.S. so that Soviet Jews can leave the USSR on visas other than those issued by Israel if they so desire. This is the point of our article published in The New York Times.

Third, we must not sell the Jackson-Vanik and Stevenson Amendments short.

Not one of the 400,000 Refuseniks should be expected to wait seven or eight more years to rejoin their families or to emigrate to Israel. To accept 10,000 as an acceptable number dooms hundreds of thousands to 40 years in the desert. Our minimum requirement the Soviets must meet for relief from the sanctions should remain at 50,000 annual departures. In the Soviet Union's present economic despair, these sanctions are even more useful than they have been in other years. And beyond mere economic considerations, Jackson-Vanik remains a vital symbol of hope to the Refuseniks and carries the message that the United States is committed to their rescue and their cause.

Finally, we must remind ourselves that the emerging Soviet "liberalizations" we read about are mainly economic reforms to increase productivity, not to affect human rights.

The reforms we see reported have not improved the plight of Soviet Jews in the slightest. In truth, there has actually been an ominous increase in anti-Semitic agitation through the emergence of groups like Pamyat, a vicious organization that preaches the need for pogroms. Instead of prosecuting those who demonstrate to gain their freedom, the Soviets must be pressured to prosecute such criminal groups as the Pamyat if they are to be taken seriously among the family of humane nations.

This very brief summary highlights the policies that UCSJ is developing and advocating. Meanwhile, with your great support, we continue to communicate directly—every day of the year—with the Refuseniks we represent.

Please visit our national office when you are in Washington. Our staff is headed by Micah H. Naftalin, our new Washington Representative who speaks for us in the nation's capitol. And I especially hope you will come to the UCSJ Annual Meeting—your Annual Meeting—September 13-15. We need your presence.

Sincerely,



Pamela Braun Cohen  
National President, UCSJ

## UCSJ MATZOH WELCOMED BY WASHINGTON HOMELESS

Washington, D.C.—Thousands of boxes of matzoh—each symbolizing the exodus of the Jews from Egypt, and each bearing a UCSJ label—were delivered to the Soviet Embassy as part of an historic UCSJ Passover campaign. The matzoh was sent to Soviet Ambassador Yuri Dubinin to call attention to the plight of the more than 400,000 Jews whose desire to leave the Soviet Union has been blocked.

Each one-pound box of unleavened bread bore a pre-printed label which declared, "Please Deliver to One of the 400,000 Jews Who Wish to Leave the Soviet Union."

But each attempt to deliver the packages to the Soviet Embassy resulted in the matzoh being refused. Micah Naftalin, UCSJ's Washington Representative, said of the situation, "The Soviets' refusal to accept the matzoh is symbolic of its refusal to open the gates of emigration."

UCSJ was then notified by postal authorities that the Washington postal warehouse was accumulating a small mountain of packages that could not be delivered. And the decision was made to put the food to good use.

So several truckloads of matzoh were delivered to Luther Place, a Washington church that feeds hundreds of Washington's homeless and impoverished.

"If the matzoh can't be used by Jews leaving for an exodus out of Egypt, which in the contemporary mean-

ing is the Soviet Union," said Reverend John Steinbruck, who supervises Luther Place, "why not let it be used by the homeless?"

UCSJ offered the matzoh to Steinbruck because of his long record of work on behalf of Soviet Refuseniks.

As he presented Reverend Steinbruck with the matzoh, Naftalin noted the special relationship between the hungry in Washington and two prominent Refuseniks, Lev Elbert and Leonid Yusefovich, who were engaged in lengthy hunger strikes.



John Rosenberg and Reverend Steinbruck loading matzo onto trucks bound for delivery to Washington's homeless.

Said Naftalin, "We join in solidarity with Reverend Steinbruck in distributing to the poor of this city the symbolic bread of affliction that UCSJ members throughout the country have been sending with the universal plea to let all our people go." \*

[Editor's Note: UCSJ has been advised that due to the nature of postal delivery, some boxes of matzoh arrived at the Soviet Embassy well after the presentation to the hungry and homeless served by Reverend Steinbruck. These boxes, also refused, were then returned to the original sender.

If your box of matzoh was returned to you, take heart. The importance of your gesture was the message you sent—the message that you maintain a heartfelt concern for our brothers and sisters trapped by unjust Soviet policy. And that you are willing to act on their behalf until every Soviet Jew desiring to emigrate is at last free. And that message the Soviets did receive.]



Alexander Slepak speaking at the rally on Capitol steps. With him are (l-r) Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Elie Wiesel, and brother, Leonid.

## SEVENTEEN-DAY HUNGER STRIKE DOES NOT WEAKEN ALEXANDER SLEPAK'S SPIRIT

On March 27, 1987, Alexander Slepak began a seventeen-day hunger strike—one day for each of the seventeen years his parents have lived in refusal. He did so with the full support, help and coordinated efforts of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

His parents are Vladimir and Maria Slepak. Known in the Soviet Union as the mother and father of the Jewish emigration movement, they have been refused permission to emigrate from the Soviet Union for seventeen years. They, too, began a hunger strike on the same day as their son—his on the steps of the United States Capitol, theirs in front of the Supreme Soviet.

On April 13, the final day of the strike, UCSJ coordinated a huge rally on the steps of the Capitol. Its purpose, according to Pamela Braun Cohen, National President of the UCSJ, was to bring to the attention of the world the desperation of the Slepaks and the 400,000 other Refuseniks who still struggle to survive in the pain of refusal.

It was here that Alexander Slepak chose to complete his hunger strike. It was here that Alexander—a father of two children—would share the frustration and suffering he feels because of his long separation from his parents.

The first to speak at the emotion-laden rally just before Passover was Micah Naftalin, Washington Representative of the UCSJ. On this bright, sunny Sunday which contrasted so sharply with the painful subject being discussed, Naftalin called the Slepaks “the mother and father of the Jewish reawakening movement. They symbolize the 400,000 Refuseniks and other Jews who have risked their lives and safety merely by having the courage to say they wish to escape the state-sponsored anti-Semitism of the Soviet Union.”

Naftalin then introduced Alexander Slepak. Now a physician living in Philadelphia, Alexander left the Soviet Union in 1977. Weak from seventeen days without food, he spoke from the steps of the Capitol “on behalf of my parents and all others.”

Slepak spoke of Secretary of State George Shultz’s request to meet with his parents during their hunger strike while Shultz was in Moscow. But his father was detained and only later released.

“Is that Glasnost, is that the openness, Mr. Gorbachev?” Slepak asked. “Is this the real sign that my parents will soon be free according to all civilized norms

and democratization that has been promised? Or have we just lifted the mask and seen the real Gorbachev and the real government?”

Referring to his father as a modern Moses leading his people to freedom, Slepak said, “It is time for Moses to leave Pharaoh (Gorbachev). It is time for him to be picked up on the arms of the Jewish people and taken out of Russia. But we also can’t forget all the others. Do not forget our fight . . . do not forget the suffering,” he cautioned the crowd.

He was followed by Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, who said the Slepaks were “precious in themselves and important because they stand for hundreds of thousands of others.”

Ambassador Kirkpatrick passed the microphone to Nobel Peace Prize winner and spokesman for the suffering of Jews everywhere, Elie Wiesel.

Wiesel spoke directly to Mr. Gorbachev when he said, “. . . as long as Vladimir and Maria Slepak are being harassed, imprisoned, psychologically tortured, tormented, I cannot believe in you. I don’t understand, Mr. Gorbachev. What is in it for you in keeping the Slepaks there? What have they done to you? What have they done to the Soviet Union? Let them come to their families. Seventeen years is enough.”

He, too, looked at the crowd and said, “Keep protesting, keep remembering . . . the Slepaks have maintained their hope because they know we care.”

**“If you turn your eyes from us,  
even for a moment,  
we will cease to exist.”**  
—Vladimir Slepak

The ongoing commitment of the UCSJ, Alexander’s act of courage, and that of his parents, brought to the attention of the world, in as public a fashion as possible, the plight of the Jews of the Soviet Union.

The rally was coordinated by the office of National President, Pamela Braun Cohen. A number of member councils, including those in Long Island, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Miami and Denver, held rallies on the same day. Across the country, UCSJ brought to the American public the plight of not only the Slepaks, but all Refuseniks.

“We have made the world more aware,” said Cohen, “and continue to do so every day, of the desperation of the 400,000 struggling to leave the iron grip of Soviet tyranny.

“The Slepaks have worked tirelessly, for 20 years, to provide aid and comfort to the Refuseniks in the Soviet Union.

“It is critical that the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews increase substantially our commitment to the freedom of these two human beings who have cared so much for so many others. They deserve to see the grandchildren they’ve never laid eyes on other than in photographs, never held in their arms, never kissed or hugged.

“Alexander’s hunger strike, and that of his parents,



Local outpouring of support for the plight of the Slepaks during the rally opening.

were powerful statements in addition to being painful personal deprivations. But that is the story of the Slepak family—the movement has always taken precedence for them, even over their own physical comfort.

“The Slepaks are true Jewish heroes and the UCSJ pledges to do everything humanly possible to see to it that they reach the Promised Land they so richly deserve to reach.” \*

## A SLEPAK RETROSPECTIVE...

Vladimir and Maria Slepak forever changed the world’s view of the plight of Soviet Jews in the 1960’s. More than any others, these brave souls showed us how terrible the lives of Refuseniks really were.

They were among the founding members, in the mid-1960’s, of the Jewish “reawakening” in the Soviet Union. From the strength of their fervor and convictions came the shape, the scope, the direction, and the very soul of the Jewish emigration movement.

It was the Slepaks who said that official and individual anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union made it impossible to ever live a full Jewish life in that country. They saw no hope that anti-Semitism would ever leave the natural order of the Soviet Union.

It was to their apartment, in Moscow, that Jews seeking emigration came for advice, encouragement, comfort. It was Vladimir who organized Judaic study and Hebrew classes. It was Maria who shared her hope, her spirit and her soul to everyone in need.

And so many times Vladimir and Maria accompanied their fellow Jews to the airport when their visas were granted, only to be left behind at the gate watching the others fly off to freedom.

It is a supreme injustice, a crime against humanity, that these two human beings—who are counted among the originators of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group—are still in refusal after seventeen years of harassment, abuse and exile.

They, whose past sacrifices have meant so much to so many, now deserve a response of enthusiastic support from us. \*

The following article is reprinted as it appeared on the editorial page of The New York Times, Thursday, June 18, 1987.

The New York Times

## Give Soviet Jews a Choice

By Pamela B. Cohen  
and Micah H. Naftalin

**S**everal American Jewish organizations have endorsed an Israeli plan that would require all Jews leaving the Soviet Union to go to Israel via Rumania, thereby automatically conferring Israeli citizenship on them and making it harder for them to come to the United States.

The plan denies the emigrants the right to determine their own destination and should be opposed until their choice of final destination and citizenship is guaranteed.

Currently, Jews leaving the Soviet Union fly first to Vienna. Those who want to go to Israel from there can do so. Alternatively, they can fly from Vienna to the United States, which is what most Jewish emigrants do.

Israel wants to close the option of flying first to Vienna, because it desperately needs the skills and manpower that emigrants can offer. What's more, Israelis feel it is the duty of Jewish emigrants to return to Israel, their homeland. That is understandable, but the proposed policy is coercive and would delay, sometimes for years, the reunion of many emigrants with family members who live in the United States. The emphasis should be on freedom of choice.

Under Israeli law, a Soviet refugee acquires Israeli citizenship automatically upon landing in Israel. But as soon as the émigrés gain Israeli citizenship, they also lose refugee status under American law. Thus, in order to enter the United States from Israel, émigrés must apply within the normal immigration quotas.

To be sure, Israel needs and wants to attract Soviet Jews. But the right of people to emigrate freely to any country willing to accept them is guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Final Act of the Helsinki Accords. Emigrants hardly deserve further governmental coercion as they step across the border to freedom. This searingly painful conflict requires full, public discussion.

### Direct flights to Israel from Rumania make it harder for them to enter the U.S.

Besides limiting emigrants' freedom of choice, the Israeli plan has caused disputes that are distracting world attention from the chief issue facing Soviet Jews, which is to pressure the Soviet Union to allow more Jews to emigrate.

Why give the Russians more ammunition for their propaganda war? Surely, Soviet officials will recognize the irony of the Israeli proposal and use it to embarrass the Israeli Government by releasing émigrés so committed to going to the West that they will stage demonstrations at Ben-Gurion Airport.

Secretary of State George P. Shultz remains firmly committed to freedom of choice, but he is aware of the difficulty of changing the definition of refugees in order to accommodate Soviet Jews without similar accommodation for refugees from other regions. To do so would undermine confidence in the fairness of the American refugee program.

Furthermore, changing the transit station from Austria to Rumania would push the entire Jewish emigration program out of the international spotlight and far from American influence. It would also make the program susceptible to pressure from Arab countries that might want to urge Moscow to cut off the flow of Jews to Israel.

The Russians anticipate that by accepting direct flights and a limited escalation of emigration to 11,000 Jews — only one-fifth of the 1979 emigra-

tion level — they will receive in exchange trade and arms agreements and, perhaps, a role in a Middle East peace conference.

It would be a grave miscalculation for Jewish leaders to offer rewards in exchange for such a low emigration level when the Russians have never before had stronger motivations to improve their record of allowing Jews to emigrate.

To warrant American support for direct flights, further diplomatic initiatives by Israel and the United States are necessary. We strongly urge both nations to consider the following points:

First, Israel should conclude an agreement with the Soviet Union for the voluntary repatriation to Israel of all Soviet Jews without regard to family ties. Such an agreement would send a needed and unambiguous message of welcome from Israel.

Second, the United States should initiate negotiations with Moscow to confirm the principle of free emigration based on invitations from the United States as well as Israel. It is time to recognize that many Soviet Jews, especially the tens of thousands whose families live in the United States, see our country as their preferred destination.

Third, it must be made clear that the direct flight issue plays no part in American insistence on high levels of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union and on human rights improvements by the Russians.

These are painful considerations both for the American Jewish community and for Israel. But the long-term strength of Soviet Jewry emigration efforts, and the viability of American human rights policies, depend on the Russians' continued appreciation that American Jews and their leadership reflect the essential values of the United States and its Government.

Following the flower presentation, a luncheon honoring Ida Milgrom, mother of Natan and Leonid Sharansky, was held with UCSJ President Pamela Braun Cohen and past president of UCSJ Lynn Singer as featured speakers.

Members of the Washington Committee for Soviet Jewry, Omaha Committee and the Colorado Committee of Concern all attended the luncheon as did members of the Committee of 21 and the Congressional Wives, groups of Congressional wives who have been extraordinarily active on behalf of Soviet Jewry and, in particular, on behalf of the Prisoners of Conscience.

A call was placed to Ida Nudel and Judith Ratner (whose sister was present) and a number of Congressional wives had the opportunity to speak with these women in Moscow.

Summarizing the day's events, President Cohen remarked, "I hope our actions send a clear signal to the

This important message is another example of the many ways in which UCSJ serves as the voice of the Refuseniks.

## UCSJ ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED

The Annual Meeting of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews has been scheduled to take place in Washington, D.C., on September 13, 14 and 15.

This year's meeting will feature speakers from the Administration and Congress and will include a visit to

Congress to express our concerns on the current direction Soviet Human Rights is taking. It will culminate Sunday with a rally of Soviet-American emigres on the Capitol grounds where we will present the Vladimir Slepak Award to a distinguished American.

There will be a lengthy discussion of our policies and we encourage every one of our members to attend!

Please contact our Washington office if you can attend or require further information. We hope to see you there!

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On Wednesday, March 11, Pamela Braun Cohen, Lynn Singer, Ida Milgrom, Leonid Sharansky, Katherine Porter and Annette Lantos approached the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C., carrying armfuls of brightly colored flowers. The bouquets were delivered in honor of International Women's Day which is celebrated in Eastern Bloc countries.

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews demonstrated its solidarity with, and support of, this woman-to-woman commemoration which takes place each year.



Speaking with reporters about the day's events, (l-r) Lynn Singer, Pat Spiller, Ida Milgrom, Pamela Braun Cohen, Lev Blitshein, Leonid Sharansky

This year's action symbolized UCSJ's solidarity with the more than six dozen Soviet women from eight cities across the Soviet Union who had gone on a hunger strike to focus world attention on the endless sentence of life in refusal imposed upon them—and hundreds of thousands of other Soviet Jews—by the Soviet government.

Leonid Sharansky noted, "We only want to direct attention to these women. They say, 'Don't forget us.'"

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Summarizing the day's events, President Cohen remarked, "I hope our actions send a clear signal to the

Soviet government that we are inextricably linked to these Soviet women and their desperate strike for the right to emigrate and once again be reunited with their families."

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews has, as its mandate, solidarity with the Jews of the Soviet Union in whatever way it is possible to show it. UCSJ strives to bring the plight of Soviet Jewry to the forefront and keep the issue alive and burning in the minds and hearts of concerned people everywhere.★

## UCSJ PRESIDENT AND WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE RETURN HOME FROM VIENNA CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

As the third session of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe reconvened in Vienna on May 5, Pamela Braun Cohen, UCSJ National President, and Micah Naftalin, UCSJ Washington Representative, were present to serve the needs and interests of Soviet Jewry.

The conference was the latest in a series of meetings scheduled to monitor compliance of the 35 signatory nations with the provisions outlined in the Final Act of the Helsinki Accords. Of particular importance to the UCSJ was the opportunity to impress upon the delegations of the United States and other Western nations the most recent Soviet violations of the Helsinki Agreement.

The primary concern was to ensure that these delegations understand that, while there was some slight escalation in the emigration numbers, the Soviets were closing the emigration process by refusing exit visas to long-term Refuseniks based on the erroneous allegations that they had access to secrets—and denying the right of thousands to apply because of the narrow interpretation of the Soviets' enforcement of the new Emigration Code.

UCSJ was present directly and personally to confront the Soviet government delegation. In an unprecedented three-hour meeting, Cohen and Naftalin met with a deputy of the All Union OVIR, the agency controlling the issuance of visas. UCSJ raised the issue of the Soviets' flagrant violations of the Helsinki Act and strongly opposed the widespread refusals based on secrecy. Individual cases were cited. Protests were lodged. Written complaints and appeals by Refuseniks were given. During this blunt discussion, the Soviet officials admitted that the present state of increased numbers of Soviet Jews receiving permission to emigrate is only a temporary stage.

UCSJ served as the voice of the Refuseniks and reminded all delegates that the lives of 400,000 Soviet Jews who wish to emigrate, to be repatriated to Israel, or once again to join their families, bear strong testimony to

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(VIENNA—continued from page 7)

the failure of the Soviet government to live up to this agreement despite the current public relations position the Soviets are attempting to advance.

The UCSJ delegates reported that the United States delegation, under the inspired and committed leadership of Ambassador Warren Zimmerman, consistently demonstrated a firm commitment to the human rights issues contained in the accords, and clearly links these issues to the issue of security. They frequently assert that if the Soviets cannot honor international agreements affecting their own citizens—with Jewish emigration as an example—then they cannot be trusted in the areas of arms reductions or other negotiations.

Like UCSJ, the United States delegation has shown an abiding commitment to a sustained level of large numbers of Jews emigrating from the Soviet Union. And all delegation members regard the increased levels of the past few months as but a token move.

The U.S. delegates also expressed alarm at the Soviets' obvious pattern of reducing the number of new applications for exit visas by increasingly using national security as a reason for denial.

Such firm stances, which were uniformly endorsed by many other NATO-power delegations, were deemed encouraging by members of the UCSJ delegation—especially the firm linkage between human rights performance as documented through action rather than words, and any future agreements in the areas of economic development and national security.

Such a decision would condemn hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews to life sentences of continued suffering in the Soviet Union.

One of the actions that must be taken immediately is to reject the Soviet proposal to schedule an international human rights meeting for Moscow later this year unless there is clear evidence that the Soviets have abandoned

their tragic policies. The evidence must take the form of high numbers of Jewish emigrants for a sustained period of time.

Vienna confirmed the UCSJ position that the West must not give away anything, nor lose any political leverage, until the 400,000 Soviet Jews who desire to emigrate are free. \*

(VIOLATIONS—continued from page 1)

works; C-Span, AP, UPI, Reuters, The Jewish Telegraphic Agency, The Washington Times, The Denver Post, The Los Angeles Times and The Des Moines Register.

Arriving late because of inclement weather, McGill University Law Professor Irwin Cotler concluded the meeting with a statement that included policy recommendations for future dealings with the Soviets on human rights questions.

Professor Cotler, who served as Sharansky's attorney, declared that, "Soviet law itself, even in the age of Gorbachev, emerges not as a protection of rights, but as an instrument of repression."

As Professor Cotler reached his conclusion, he hit upon the truth of the state of human rights in the Soviet Union by summarizing the thousands of words entered into evidence that day. "Soviet human rights are there by way of declaration and discourse and representation and cosmetics," he said. "They have yet to be implemented as a matter of both Soviet law and Soviet reality." \*

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*“Through our suffering we [Prisoners of Conscience] have been able to push the gates of the U.S.S.R. just slightly ajar. Through the tiny opening we have made in the Iron Curtain, Jews manage to get out of the U.S.S.R. . . . But the opening is small and vulnerable, and we implore all of you in the free world to keep a close watch on the opening and not to allow the gates to be slammed shut again.”*

—Ida Nudel—  
*Refusenik and former Prisoner of Conscience*