

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews

DECISIONS ON "DROP-OUTS" - A Commentary

The issue of the "noshrim" ("drop-outs") has surfaced once again in the Jewish community. The debate is about those Soviet Jews who leave Russia on Israeli visas and then proceed to destinations other than Israel: Should the Jewish community give them help in resettlement? The debate is tense and emotional, mixing financial and ideological issues in a most uncomfortable way.

On November 14, leaders of the North American Jewish community meeting in Montreal will attempt to deal with this issue. We do not pretend to have an easy answer to the tough set of problems that will face the men and women in Montreal. We do hope they will address the issue with clear thinking and without resorting to facile, unproved assumptions which obscure the facts. Too often we hear "The Russians will cut back visas because Soviet Jews are not going to Israel." Or, "In order to please the Arabs, the Russians will cut back on visas if too many go to Israel." Or, "The Russians are granting visas to Soviet Jews who want to go to America in order to overburden the American Jewish community." Such speculation serves the purposes of propaganda rather than clear thinking.

We at the Union of Councils hope that one principle will remain uppermost in the minds of those who are making momentous policy decisions for the Jewish community: Nothing must be done which will hinder the flow of Soviet Jews out of the Soviet Union.

Starting on page 5 we are reprinting a number of articles which have appeared recently on this subject.

KISLIK FLAT SEARCHED, FILE OPENED

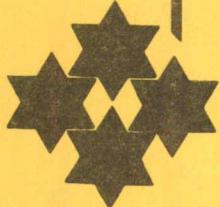
The home of Vladimir Kislik, the Kiev physicist, was raided on September 21 by five men, including Kiev prosecutor Ignatiev. They ransacked and searched the flat for thirteen hours, confiscating books, cassettes, records and a tape recorder. Ignatiev told Kislik that a file on him had been opened under article 136 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code, which corresponds to Article 141 of the RSFSR Code, Violation of Authors' and Inventors' Rights. Kislik was then called twice for interrogation at the prosecutor's office. One interrogation was on September 29, the anniversary of the Babi Yar massacre, which prevented him from attending a memorial service at the site arranged by Kiev refuseniks. Kislik is currently working as a bookbinder and his phone, which was periodically disconnected and reconnected, is again not functioning.

CULTURAL MATERIALS 'DISAPPEAR' FROM MOSCOW APARTMENT

Recently Leonid Volgovsky, the Moscow Hebrew teacher and a computer scientist, returned to Moscow from a brief stay in Lithuania only to discover that all his Hebrew books (about 500) records and cassettes were missing from his apartment. In addition, the landlady has given him notice to vacate the apartment. "The mysterious disappearance of his books," one of his students said, "coupled with virtual eviction is most distressing." Now the Volgovskys are having great difficulties in finding another flat and they had to send their eleven year old daughter Kira to Gorki to stay with her grandmother.

MINSK JEW RELEASED

Mikhail Zaborov who was arrested in Minsk (see October 10 Alert) following a complaint from a local notary, has now been released, according to a report from London.



NEWS BRIEFS ON THE PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

* We now have the name and phone numbers of Shcharansky's camp commandant. Contact him to insist that Shcharansky be given proper medical treatment for his head pains and blurred vision. Camp Commandant: Malofeyev, Office telephone number is Chistopol 20 207 and home telephone number is Chistopol 23 000. (The telephone connection is made via the town of Kazan.).

* Aleksei Murzhenko has been moved to a different camp. Please correct your records: USSR RSFSR, Moscow, P/ya 5110/1, Utch. Zhkh 385/1-8, Murzhenko, Aleksei. Lubov, his wife, has learned that Aleksei was in the prison hospital for three weeks for treatment of TB after she wrote to the prison doctors.

* Yuri Federov has also been moved. His prison address is exactly the same as Murzhenko's. Neither of them have received mail for some time.

* Yosif Zisels was reportedly placed in a punishment cell for fifteen days in September for refusing to clean potatoes crawling with maggots. His address: USSR 275000, Ukrainian SSR, Chernovitskaya Oblast, g. Sokiryany, Utch. Rch - 328/67, Zisels, Yosif. His family is now the target of local KGB harassment in Chernovtsy. KGB officer Podkovitov has viciously attacked Zisel's reputation and slanderous rumors are being circulated about the family. Protest to: USSR, Ukrainian SSR, Chernovtsy, KGB, Lt. Podkovitov.

* Yankel Groberman's prison address is Posiolok Krikovo, Moldavian SSR, USSR. Groberman was arrested along with Arkady Feldman and Alexander Milner when they had an altercation with some rowdies in a cafe. They had been celebrating Feldman's receipt of an exit visa.

RECOMMENDED READING

Testimony on the Living Condition and State of Health of Prisoners of Zion in the Soviet Prison - published by "Shomer Achi Anochi."

A letter which accompanied this booklet contains the following information about it:

"During the course of the past few months we have collected testimonies about the living conditions and state of health of the Prisoners of Zion in Soviet prisons and the 'medical treatment' they receive. Former Prisoners of Zion who came on aliyah recently, testified before us and their testimonies are compiled in the enclosed booklet.

"The testimonies brought before us are very severe. We have published them in the hope that the publication of the truth will and must serve as an effective weapon in the fight against Soviet injustice."

The booklet is available for \$1.00 from "Shomer Achi Anochi", Nissenbaum St. 11, Kiryat Moshe, Jerusalem.

TWO REFUSENIKS ON HUNGER STRIKE

Two leading Kishinev refuseniks began a five-day hunger strike on November 1st which they threaten to repeat at the beginning of every month until their exit visas are approved. Aleksandr Khozin, 32, and Vladimir Tsukerman, 32, sent a letter of appeal to Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev asking that their exit visas be granted. They said they wish to be reunited with their families in Israel and will continue their hunger strikes until their visas are approved.

MOSCOW REFUSENIKS APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE KIEV TWELVE

TO: First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Shcherbitzky

On October 11 and 12, a group of Jewish refuseniks of Kiev, namely: Elena Oleynik, Natalya Naumova, Sergei and Vadim Rotstein, Lina Chernyak, Ada Brodskaya, Alexander Rosenman, Sara Pyatetskaya, Inna and Sergei Chernyavsky, Alexander Sukholussky and Sisko - were seeking reception in the waiting room of the Ukrainian Central Party Committee. They were demanding legally motivated answers to their applications. Their collective appeal to you was ignored and when at the end of the working day on October 12 they refused to leave the room without an answer, militia forced them out to the internal yard of the building. One of the group -Sara Pyatetskaya - an elderly sick woman, fainted there and was taken to a hospital (now she is safe at home) while the others were taken to a court, sentenced there fifteen days of administrative arrest which they are serving now in a militia jail. We, Jewish refuseniks of Moscow, support the lawful demand of our fellow-refuseniks in Kiev and resolutely protest against their arrest.

(This letter was signed by thirty-two refuseniks outside of the Moscow synagogue.)

LENINGRAD REFUSENIKS APPEAL TO UNITED STATES SENATE ON BEHALF OF VICTOR YELISTRATOV

Honorable Sirs:

We, friends of Muscovite Victor Yelistratov, appeal to you to help him.

In April, 1979, his wife was sentenced to prison for fifteen days (for "hooliganism"). This was done with the obvious intention of intimidating Victor. On April 24, he was taken to KGB headquarters where he received a warning notice. He was charged with providing slanderous information to foreigners and to correspondents, traveling all over the country in order to gather this information, organizing protest demonstrations and living on money received from the West.

We know Victor Yelistratov as an extremely honest, selfless and respected man. He constantly assists those who are in need of help, trying to publicize the details of human rights infractions and breaches of the Soviet Union's own legal code.

All of these activities are in accordance with the provisions of the Helsinki Agreements. But in spite of this, the KGB has summoned him several times and has tried to frighten and blackmail him. We fear for his life, especially after the latest incidents. We have the life of Anatoly Scharansky as an example. We are certain that the KGB will choose Victor Yelistratov as their next victim.

We know that Victor Yelistratov has been trying to emigrate from the Soviet Union for the last seven years, and we know of your concern for human rights. Therefore, we appeal to you to help him receive permission to emigrate and thus avert further severe and possibly violent reprisals against him.

Vladimir Knokh
Yuri Shpeizman
Grigory Genusov
Lev Shapiro
Zalman Kunik
Efim Budilovsky
Evgeny Shakhnovich
Vladimir Wolfson

Lev Furman
Isaac Kogan
Evgeny Matskin
Aba Taratuta
Igor Raykhlin
Vladimir Rosenthal
Yuli Karolin
Evgenya Lutskaya

NEW REFUSENIKS

Margarita and Leonid Kagan
Ul. Pobeda, 27a, Kv. 17
g. Gomel
USSR

They have two daughters, born 1972 and 1978, and Margarita's parents are now living in Miami.

Solomon Flaks
Krasnoflotskaya 98, apt. 56
Donetsk 340059
Ukrainian SSR. USSR

He and his wife are both scientists who have been dismissed from their jobs. Their son and daughter have been dismissed from the university. They have asked for correspondents.

Michael and Marina Golubchin
Prospekt Maria Theresa 74, apt. 34
Leningrad, RSFSR

Applied for exit visa in 1976. Their son, Leonid is 19 and daughter, Lana, is 10.

Avram and Tatyana Butovsky
Zentralny Bulva No. 14, Kv. 36
Zaporozhye, Ukraine - USSR

Avram's mother and sister live in Israel. Refused "for Insufficient kinship."

Yuri Solomonovich Pevzner
Moskovskaya 163, apt. 47
Novosibirsk 8
RSFSR 630008

Yuri, who was born in 1953, is an energy engineer.

THE FOLLOWING HAVE RECEIVED PERMISSION

Zigmund Berkovich - Beregovo Boris Kaplan - Riga

THE FOLLOWING HAVE LEFT THE SOVIET UNION

Yosif Gross - Beregovo	Felix Levich - Riga
Oleg Trakhtenberg - Kishinev	Boris Graizel - Minsk
Boris Grinfeld - Chernovtsy	Larissa Vilenskaya - Moscow
Semion Amdursky - Moscow	Elena Fuchs - Moscow
Mark Beilinkov - Moscow	

SOME PROGRESS FOR FORMER PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

OVIR has agreed to take former Prisoner of Conscience Boris Tsitlionok's application papers, but has refused to take Mark Nashpitz's papers because he has no propiska (official permit to live in Moscow).

The emigrating Soviet Jew. —

another kind of 'defector'

By John Bierman
Special to The Globe

TEL AVIV — Zionist leaders, alarmed at the number of Jews who leave the Soviet Union for Israel and wind up in the United States, again have been unable to find a way to stem what they call the

"dropout rate."

More than two-thirds of the Jews coming out of the Soviet Union at a rate of 500 a month — all with visas to Israel — are switching plans as soon as they get to transit centers in Austria and Italy.

The US immigration quota is 4000 a

month, and the limit usually is reached, a fact that is deeply disturbing for Zionist ideologues — all the more so because these "defections" are financed and encouraged by American Jewish charitable organizations such as the Hebrew Immigrant Society and the Joint Distribution Committee.

out.

But Lazaris said: "They have never been Jews in the real sense of the word and will never be Jews in America. They did not fight or escape. They were neither heroes nor victims. They simply used the road that was meant for others."

Herman Branover, now professor of mechanical engineering at an Israeli university, says the dropouts no longer think of themselves as such "or feel that they're doing anything wrong — far from it."

He believes the measures proposed to slow the dropout rate cannot help because they are based on illusions about the attractions of the Jewish state — with its soaring inflation, political uncertainties and security problems.

"Settling in Israel at a time when the alternative exists requires a very strong Jewish motivation," he said, and there are very few Jews left in Russia who have such motivation.

Most dropouts appear to keep their thoughts and feelings to themselves once they reach the "goldene medien" as those who speak Yiddish call America. One who spoke out is Alexander Dranov, who said:

"The first feeling of freedom that every Soviet Jew has is the knowledge that he no longer has to do anything he doesn't want to do — including going to Israel."

For a Russian, the joy of not having to care a damn about anything political is a precious joy. The opportunity to be free from any obligation ... is synonymous with freedom in the minds of many Soviet Jews."

"There seems no doubt that many Soviet Jews have misconceptions about Israel — mainly that it is a tightly controlled socialist society, not all that different from Russia. Some think that if they come here they will be forced to live on a kibbutz, which they equate with a Soviet collective farm, unaware that nowadays it's virtually impossible to get kibbutz membership."

Others appear to have exaggerated ideas about the danger and hardships of life here. On the other hand, official propaganda painting a rosy picture of life in Israel has been known to create bitter resentment when those persuaded by it discover the truth.

SPECIAL TO THE JTA TWO FEDERATIONS URGE THAT AID BE HALTED TO SOVIET JEWISH DROPOUTS

NEW YORK, Oct. 29 (JTA) — One of the more lively sessions at the 48th General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations in Montreal Nov. 14-18 may very well be on the issue of Soviet Jewish dropouts. At least two Federations have indicated that they will present resolutions on this issue which some observers say may produce fireworks.

The two resolutions, one by the United Jewish Community of Bergen County (New Jersey), and the other by the Jewish Community Council of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, affirm that Soviet Jews who arrive in Vienna with Israeli visas must go to Israel and that Federations in the United States should no longer be financially responsible for aiding in their resettlement in this country.

Both resolutions also state that those Soviet Jews for whom the Federations have already assumed responsibility will receive the requisite aid. The Oklahoma resolution adds that "A Russian Jew who arrives in a local community through any means" should be aided in resettling.

The Bergen County resolution, which was passed 34-14, reaffirms "total support for the present policy of using world Jewish charitable funds and human resources to help all Jews exercise their right to emigrate from the Soviet Union" and that Soviet Jews "will receive our total support for the use of world Jewish charitable funds and human resources to aid all Jews to immigrate to Israel and be 'resettled' in Israel."

Will Not Allocate Future Funds

The resolution adds that Soviet Jews "will have the right to resettle anywhere else in the world, doing so by utilizing family or personal resources. We declare that the United Jewish Community of Bergen County shall not allocate any future funds or human resources, nor accept any additional Russian Jews for resettlement in Bergen County."

The Oklahoma City resolution, which was adopted by the Community Council's executive committee, stated that "mindful of the need for increased immigration to Israel," the Council "requests that the UJA (United Jewish Appeal), JDC (Joint Distribution Committee), HIAS and its member communities take positive steps to insure that all Russian Jews who arrive in Vienna with Israeli visas be sent without delay to Israel."

A spokesman for HIAS said that neither his organization nor the JDC, both of which are beneficiaries of the UJA, ever initiate contact with Soviet Jews in Vienna to discuss resettlement with them. The two service organizations discuss resettlement only after the Jewish Agency in Vienna, which handles transmigrant Soviet Jews, recommends to the JDC and HIAS those who insist that they do not want to emigrate to Israel. Even then, the HIAS spokesman said, his organization seeks by every means possible to first ascertain that the Soviet Jew in question is convinced that he or she does not want to go to Israel.

Why Not Israel?

by Donna Arzt

"We are making up our minds about our destination and I am afraid it will not be Israel. When nearly six years ago we abandoned our good positions that we held in this country and applied for visas we were very idealistic, studied Hebrew and thought only about Israel. But living as refuseniks during all these years was a very painful and sobering experience. Now we have very serious doubts which, we feel, won't allow us to be happy in Israel."

So read the recent letters of Soviet Jews, not simply the anonymous, first-time visa applicants, but the prominent activists and defiant demonstrators who make up the refusenik communities in the USSR. Of the 32,000 Jews who left the Soviet Union from January to September of this year, almost 70% "dropped out" of the exodus, choosing the West over the destination marked on their visas, Israel. This article will attempt to shed some light on the reasons for this phenomenon and evaluate the various proposals for stanching the flow of *noshirim*.

Neshira must first be seen as a regional occurrence. Soviet authorities control the release valve, regulating the number of exist visas from different geographic areas. In the earlier phase of emigration, before 1976, most emigrants came from the Baltic states and the eastern republics, where Jewish cultural and religious life has remained resilient. Over 90% from this area made aliyah. But in the past few years many have been released from the central areas — Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa — where assimilation is more prevalent, the professional education of Jews more advanced and the people more Westernized. Approximately half of these emigres have chosen Western countries. A recent study, however, reports that aliyah is now declining in the peripheral areas as well as the center. Perhaps those with the strongest Jewish allegiances have already left for Israel.

Interviewed in Vienna and Rome, *noshirim* have given a variety of reasons for their choice of destination. The most common include the following: 1) Joining relatives already in America. (As more and more emigrate here, this motive becomes more significant.) 2) The preferences of non-Jewish spouses who, they predict, will not feel comfortable in Israel. 3) Their perception and misperception of employment opportunities (which in many cases may actually be better in Israel). 4) Concerns about the Israeli economy, particularly the housing shortage, and fear of the war-time atmosphere and the concomitant draft (especially for those young males who are already fleeing from Soviet conscription). 5) Reports of Israeli hostility to immigrants and the sense that they will be more welcome in the U.S., where a more visible commitment to the Soviet Jewry movement has been made. 6) Climatic preferences. 7) Language barriers, English being a more common second language than Hebrew. 8) Material aspiration that can only be fulfilled in America's consumer society. 9) Generally, the lack of Jewish identity. Approximately 12% of *noshirim* are only half-Jewish and for many full-Jews, the "push" of Soviet anti-Semitism may not be accompanied by the "pull" of a positive commitment to Jewish values, customs and interests.

Many of these reasons reflect an information gap between the realities of Israeli society and Soviet Jews' ignorance of the subject. Misperceptions have been attributed to the pervasive anti-Zionist propaganda in the Soviet press, as well as to the distribution of negative letters from kvetches — relatives and friends — already in Israel. (As ex-P.O.C. Edward Kuznetsov points out in *Ma'ariv*, letters that praise Israel don't usually get

through the Soviet censors.) A new Jewish agency — Absorption Ministry report concludes that the real reason for the high drop-out rate is the financial help given by HIAS, the Joint and American Jewish communities. Indeed, in a recent interview in *Moment*, Jewish Agency chairman Arye Dulzin overtly blames HIAS for *neshira*. Such reproaches simply evade the issue, which is whether Soviet Jews have the right to go anywhere. Besides, comparable aid is given to those who make aliyah. Moreover, the same study indicates that over 35% of *noshirim* would have gone to the West even without financial assistance. (There are various Christian philanthropic agencies they would then turn to.)

Many of these reasons and reasoned explanations may merely be rationalizations, pat answers given to agency interviewers and journalists. Decisions of such a magnitude as where one will spend the rest of one's life must surely be based on more complex factors. Some insight might come from an understanding of the kind of society the emigres are leaving. The most salient feature of life in the USSR is the omnipresence of the state. The government is responsible for every facet of daily life, from jobs, to radio, TV and books, to food — or the lack of food. To a certain extent, this situation is replicated in what they know of Israel: compulsory military training, travel restrictions, socialized medicine, bureaucracy. America is perceived in stark contrast to Soviet society: freedom from the obligations of citizenship or allegiance to ideologies, freedom from any "isms," be it socialism, communism — or even Zionism. As one emigre put it, "The first feeling of freedom that every Soviet Jew has is the knowledge that he no longer has to do anything he doesn't want to do — including going to Israel. It was for this reason that Soviet Jews left the Soviet Union" in the first place.

Similarly, the Jewish identity of most Soviet Jews has been a life-long burden, a barrier to mobility, a cause for harassment — by no means a positive virtue. Not only do they seek freedom from being citizens, many seek freedom from being *zhid*, Jews. They want not simply a place where Jewishness is not a barrier, but a place where Jewishness is not even an issue. For many, from their insular perspective, this place is the U.S.

There are those who have criticized *neshira* as a threat to the future of emigration, fearing that the Soviets will use the fact of increased drop-outs as an excuse to cut back on the number of visas issued. But Soviet authorities have not done so, and *neshira* may in fact be in their interest. With fewer making aliyah, they have less need to justify to the Arabs why they are bolstering the population of Israel. It's very likely that the regime is intentionally granting more visas to those Jews intending to go West — perhaps to put a burden on American resources. Besides, if the Soviets are about to decrease emigration, they can use any excuse they want, or no excuse.

Now that American Jewish communities are indeed becoming increasingly strained by the influx of immigrants — for instance, 1,500 in Chicago this year alone — local Federations are voicing concern. Calls for modified procedures have been made. Proposals include granting immediate Israeli citizenship to all emigrants, so that they can't get to the U.S. under refugee quotas; instituting direct Moscow-Lod flights, which would require Soviet cooperation, an unlikely precondition; refusing to send the required *visov* (invitation) to Jews in cities with high drop-out rates; requiring those headed West to apply for American instead of Israeli visas (despite the Soviet Union's reluctance to grant such visas) and denying financial assistance to *noshirim* without first-degree relatives in America. (Some American communities, such as Boston, have closed their doors to those without immediate family there.) Assistance is already denied to *yordim*, those who previously settled in Israel and now wish to migrate to Western countries.

These proposals have one thing in common: they are coercive measures designed to limit the choice of people who are trying to escape from a more extreme kind of collectivist oppression. Such methods do a disservice to the Jewish institutions and communities, which should instead be trying to teach these newcomers the Jewish values of free will and individual choice. Moreover, these tactics play right into the hands of the Soviets. As former refuseniks Sasha Luntz wrote in an open letter to the Jewish Agency: "If we implement the use of prohibitive measures to channel the flow of Jews to Israel, we will thereby assume some of the functions of the KGB by forcing some Jews to postpone their departure from the USSR and by creating sources of discrediting (this time not groundlessly) the democratic character of Zionism and Israel."

The Soviet Jewry movement must have but one goal — saving Jews. To try to manipulate *neshira* would thwart that goal. Tens, maybe hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews would be lost to the Jewish people, due either to the forces of assimilation at work in the USSR, or to the alienation that would inevitably develop among emigrants confronting this further compulsion. Non-coercive steps are available: increased distribution of accurate information about Israel to Jews inside the Soviet Union, and the incentives of improved absorption processes in Israel, easing the housing shortage, more loans, etc. This is where our energies should be directed.

Diapora Jews who are not making aliyah are in no position to demand it of Soviet Jews. But even Israelis should have second thoughts. We all must understand the negative forces propelling Jews away from the USSR and seek to promote the positive values that will rejuvenate and sustain the battered identity of our Soviet *chevra*.

Donna Arzt is Director of the Soviet Jewry Legal Advocacy Center on the Brandeis campus.

JTA Daily News Bulletin

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BEGIN, U.S. JEWISH LEADERS DISCUSS SOVIET DROPOUT ISSUE

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Oct. 29 (JTA) — Premier Menachem Begin met today with leaders of American Jewish organizations to discuss the problem of Soviet Jewish dropouts. Max Fisher, chairman of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors, said Begin and the Jewish leaders reached agreement on two points: the need for more Jews to leave the Soviet Union and the need for more of those leaving the Soviet Union to go to Israel. But there was little agreement on the issue of drop-outs — those who leave the USSR but do not choose to settle in Israel.

About half a year ago Begin proposed that the Joint Distribution Committee and HIAS deal only with those emigrants who have relatives in the United States. Leon Dulzin, chairman of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization Executives, said Begin's proposal had been accepted by HIAS and JDC leaders who were now discussing it with local community organizations.

"Some of the communities are ready to accept the proposal," Dulzin said, but others are not convinced. So far, the situation is that few Jewish communities in the United States believe they should stop helping Soviet Jews to settle in the U.S. in order to help reduce the dropout rate." Jewish Agency sources claimed that so far the Detroit, Miami and Los Angeles communities have agreed to reduce aid to Soviet immigrants, except for those who have close relatives in those cities. (See related story.)

The Jewish leaders who met with Begin today asked the Premier for another few weeks before giving him a final answer on how they would resolve the dropout issue. Meanwhile, it was understood that due to diminishing funds, financial aid to Soviet immigrants who wish to settle in the U.S. would be reduced. Among those meeting with Begin were, in addition to Fisher and Dulzin, Gaynor Jacobson, executive vice president of HIAS; Edwin Shapiro, president of HIAS, and Donald Robinson, president of JDC.

OUTSMARTING THE PAST

We must help rid Soviet Jews of their cockroach psychology

THE NATIONAL JEWISH MONTHLY/OCTOBER 1979

by Edward Kuznetsov
translated by Louise Shelley

TEL AVIV

A couple of days ago, I came across a letter written from Russia. It was illustrated with fascinating sketches for a tunnel between Jerusalem and Ismailov Park in Moscow. The plan calls for those who wish to leave the Soviet Union to travel to Moscow, where, while looking over their shoulders, they part the bushes in the designated sector of Ismailov Park. They enter a trap door, walk ten kilometers, and there it is: an underground highway with a line of cars waiting for passengers. A brilliant plan in my opinion. But there is a catch: The exit is so narrow that no one can pass through it.

No less curious is the plan of one engineer I spoke with in Ladispoli—a "transit station" in Italy for Soviet Jews en route to Israel. "Many of us hesitate to go to Israel," the engineer acknowledged, looking nervous and guilty. "But if they used a Soviet approach and carried us in sealed railroad cars from Vienna directly to Israel, that would be a solution to the problem of dropouts."

This project captured my imagination. I tinkered with it for three days, charting stops. Then I remembered the Mediterranean and I abandoned the notion of a blitz solution so dear to so many hearts.

*

The Israelis had such hopes for Russian emigration that, undisturbed by the 90 percent South African dropout rate, they are horrified, bewildered and perplexed by the Soviet dropout rate: 70 percent of those who leave the Soviet Union with visas for Israel are now spread throughout the world. With despondency and frequently with hysteria, these Russian Jews stubbornly turn away from Israel, though nowhere besides Israel are there people waiting for them. The doors of more affluent countries are by no means thrown wide open, but with the slyness of cockroaches Soviet Jews work their way through cracks. It is possible to understand them—but it is necessary to help rid them of their cockroach psychology.

Soviet Jews are victims of the regime and their own heroic struggle with that regime. The activists among them are prepared to do anything to get to Israel. Despite nights of terror, official misinformation and many avenues of assimilation, they have preserved their pride in their Jewishness and their ardent desire to serve Israel. But the majority of Jews now leaving the Soviet Union do not feel this ardent desire though they share some of the motivation. The important distinction is that they

lived *there*, and this plan was formulated *here*. They have played a game with strange rules, and to understand them it is necessary to abandon all plans and prepare for the unexpected. Similarly, the West, after passionately embracing the "fighting heroes of resistance" from behind the Iron Curtain, is now taking a second look: Instead of demigods, sculpted by a commiserating and sympathetic imagination, they are, at best, ordinary persons, and, at worst, dwarves with humps and a fanatic look in their eyes, with strange mannerisms, confused logic and unprecedented pretensions. Many refugees rid themselves of the hump and learn to walk erect, but the majority pride themselves in their extraordinary hump and hold in contempt the erect aborigines of the West for their decadence and naivete.

A rebellious slave is but half freed from servitude. The Soviet system has perpetuated the gravest of despots by encroaching on the spirit of man. Some victims have survived without their spirits broken; few have been able to return quickly to a normal way of life.

Emigration from the Soviet Union, in all its variations, is political. The emigrants come from a completely idealized society; they are rejecting claims of an earthly paradise. It is not always obvious, but a political coloration affects former political prisoners, refuseniks, intellectuals and economic criminals.

Barely Jews, dropouts refuse to understand the hidden potential in the opportunity to become Israeli. They close their ears, so as not to hear the past with all its sufferings, groans and prayers. They want to slip out of history, to be outside history and not to hear its roar. Too weak to cope with the past, they strive to outsmart it. Yesterday they were Jews; today they are anything but Jews. Yet they do not have the desire to be Israelis. They hope to lose themselves among the heterogeneous Western populations and at last rid themselves of the difficult time of being a Jew.

They recognize their Jewishness as an identity imposed during the Stalinist period—an atmosphere saturated with lies—and now refuse to have anything to do with their Jewishness. They strive to be more Soviet than the Kremlin oligarchs. Only the crisis of the Soviet system, accompanied in the past decades by growing anti-Semitism, convinced them that all forms of camouflage were in vain. They no longer had the strength and the ability to dissemble. Then, suddenly, the doors opened to

let them go to a place which they could not previously even have dreamed of. But when emigration became possible, Israel lost much of its attraction.

Sentenced to Jewishness, these victims and children of the Soviet regime want normalcy, as they understand it—a humane life. None of them believes the Soviet lies, but the lies are so monstrous and all-pervading that it is difficult to be rid of them or to admit that everything one hears condemning Israel from morning to night is entirely untrue.

We must reject the illusion that we can think up a magic solution. We cannot take all the pawns and turn them into queens. I proceed from two axioms: Israel needs *aliya*, including Russian *aliya*; and Israel is sufficiently flexible to reorganize its infrastructure so as to benefit, rather than suffer, from the demands on it. I depart, however, from the notion that since Israel needs *aliya*, we must increase it by financing all kinds of tactics founded on scientific plans.

The dropouts are by no means conscious fighters against the Soviet regime, nor activists of some political ideology. They are not Zionists or any other "ists." They are fleeing from anti-Semitism. Though they are not threatened by classical pogroms these days, they are frightened by what tomorrow may bring. They are also looking for the chance to live *la dolce vita*. And, generally speaking, they have a human right to do this—if we can disregard the enthusiastic Western schemes designed to rescue Soviet Jewry, as well as the necessity for their proclaiming themselves Israeli patriots in Moscow in order to secure visas.

They understand that without having voiced their protests and without the heroic campaign in the West they would not be able to free themselves from the Workers' Paradise.

In changing their stated destination once out of the Soviet Union, they are not the first to have lied. But their guilt is visible. They are continually justifying themselves—telling cock-and-bull stories, excusing themselves, fibbing, humbly or aggressively. They are still Soviets. Not believing anything, they create deception everywhere. Their spiritual muscle is tensed, and strong; they are always ready for confrontation. They are accustomed to hearing lies and to lying and are repelled by the ideological lies that surround them. But they do not know when to believe the truth. The dishonest approach to life that they have been forced to adopt has made them unable to face the new challenges of their new life.

Many of them left the Soviet

Union not only because they were tired of their second-class position, the anti-Semitism, the threats of the future and of penury, but because they imagined God knows what about the West. Although the doors of Israel are open, dropouts rush to the West because admission there is not easy. Soviet neurosis makes them argue: Where it is possible to go, it is bad; but where they do not admit you, there it is good. And where they do not let you in, they will give you something good.

Resisting the Soviet machine and its lies requires initiative and great wisdom. One must demand from the USSR that it fulfill its legal responsibilities in accordance with the international agreements it has signed: freedom of speech, the right to receive and disseminate information.

Some of the dropouts, justifying their rejection of Israel, cite letters from relatives: "We do not believe Soviet propaganda but my second cousin once removed complains about life in Israel."

For the first two or three years before he is on his feet, the second cousin once removed cries. Once he has an apartment and a car, his letters are full of praise—but letters describing progress do not get through.

Psychological insight into the mentality of Soviet Jews suggests that it would be wise not to foist Israeli citizenship on them but to make them earn the right to it. Access to the full rights of citizenship in Israel should be easier than the acquisition of citizenship in other countries, but Israeli citizenship should not be compulsory and automatic. One of the fundamental explanations dropouts give for their lack of desire to go to Israel is "they will force us into a kibbutz." To a Soviet, the kibbutz is identified with the *kolkhoz*—the hated collective farm. The basic counter-argument to this should be, "Not only don't they force you to join a kibbutz, you cannot enter one even if you deserve to."

Israeli propaganda in Italy and Austria should not be too vociferous. Most dropouts decided in Russia not to go to Israel. Those who hesitate in Italy and Austria are consumed by guilt and perceive any propaganda as analogous to the Soviet and do not hesitate to declare themselves against it.

The optimal solution is to establish "transit stations" in Israel rather than in Italy and Austria. The Soviet Union will not agree to this. In theory, at any rate, some kind of agreement could be reached with the governments of Austria and Italy.

Continued

LEON DULZIN

excerpts from the Moment

In Ladispoli, to the question, "What would you do if exit were allowed only to Israel?" dropouts answer, "We would go to Israel." We do not have the right to hope that other countries will slam their doors, but it would be sufficiently democratic and procedurally correct for emigrants with visas to Israel to receive permission from Austria and Italy to go only to Israel.

If transit stations were on Israeli territory, there would be the inevitable howl about infringement of the right of free emigration. But why should anyone howl? Is Israel any less democratic a nation than, say, Italy? Is it any harder to leave Israel than another Western country?

On the one hand, dropouts cannot be forced. They are free people. On the other hand, they are Jews who need to be urged in the right direction. They are ignorant and cannot quickly be cured of the Soviet complexes at the root of their problems. Only after they have been supplied with information is it possible to give them the burden of free choice; only then can they be considered free men capable of reaching responsible decisions.

They need understanding, pity, help and initiation in the process of democracy. They do not need to be persuaded or compelled to go to Israel. They only need to have their eyes opened to the surprises that Israel holds for them.

The structure of Western countries is sufficiently cruel and Soviet Jews are not such welcome guests. To enter those structures is not so simple. For at least ten years, they will still feel like outsiders. Why not let them see Israel—instead of having them wait in transit in Austria and Italy? Then there would be a chance for their future return to Israel.

While it is possible for the Soviet Union to slam its doors shut at any moment, we need not fear that for now. To the contrary, it is time to demand from the Soviet Union the establishment of emigration policy in accordance with generally accepted norms: continued pension eligibility, permission to take household goods and a possibility to visit Israel prior to emigration.

Let them come, look and think. Only then is it possible to speak of freedom of choice.

This article has not painted the Soviet Jews in the most positive light. Still, I do not want to leave the impression that Soviet Jews are worthless. They are a diversified group, and among them are many individuals of the highest principles who are capable of making a significant contribution to Israel's future. That so many have turned away from Israel is a result of ignorance and Soviet ideology, rather than a conscious rejection of their roots. It is desirable and necessary that Soviet Jews be relieved of their ignorance so that more of them will choose either initially or finally to settle in Israel. □

MOMENT: Mr. Dulzin, you've been in the forefront of the effort to change Jewish public policy with respect to the noshrim, the Russian Jews who exit Russia on Israeli visas, but who then elect to go to the United States rather than to Israel. Can you summarize your position for us?

Dulzin: First, let me try to set the record straight. I never said that HIAS is conducting a special activity to divert the immigrants to America. That's just not true. It's a very simple process. A fellow arrives in Vienna. Before he's even asked, on the railroad to Vienna, he tells you, "I'm not going to Israel, I'm going to HIAS." So those who are going to Israel are taken to a special camp. It's a very beautiful camp, but it's a camp. That is, it's closed—for security reasons. Those who are not going to Israel are taken by us—by the Jewish Agency—to some kind of hotel, and the next day, they come to the office of HIAS. The first person that they meet is a representative of the Jewish Agency. He tries to talk to the fellow, to ask him why, and what, and so forth. And after they talk, the Agency representative clears him; he gives him a tzetl, a form, and passes him over to HIAS. HIAS will keep him for a week or two in Vienna, and then send him over to Rome.

That's the procedure. I never made a claim against HIAS. What was my claim? My claim was that by its attitude, HIAS indirectly encourages the emigrant not to go to Israel. After all, HIAS stands for America. And if they don't have a very deep and strong motivation—and, after all, there are a lot of Zionists in this world with deep Jewish and Zionist motivation who also don't come to live in Israel—why should we expect more of these Russian Jews? Sometimes I think to myself, if we still have 20 or 30 percent coming to Israel, the others were disconnected, they were second and third generation, completely assimilated, people who remained Jews because of the passport regulations. If not for that, they would have disappeared as Jews a long time ago. So if a person like this has the option to go to America, why should he go to Israel? That's what I mean by "indirect." By the very fact that HIAS is there, ready to help, ready to make America possible, it diverts the Jews to America.

The second thing is that I've been warning all along that if we don't take measures against this problem, we will find that 60 percent, then 70 and even 80 percent will reject Israel. And we will simply kill our hope for aliyah from Soviet Russia. Unfortunately, we have now already reached the 70 percent mark. And it's not 70 percent of a small number, of, say, a thousand a month. We are expecting 50,000 this year, and 70 percent of 50,000 is a very

large number. We will be losing 4,000, maybe even 4,500 every month. You in the United States will be getting 30,000, maybe 35,000. Your honeymoon is over.

So we are facing a new situation, and a very dangerous situation. What is my argument? I have been saying one thing all along, and I say it today: I cannot force a Jew who doesn't want to come to Israel to come to us. He wants to use his Israeli visa to escape Soviet Russia? Alright. He can simply say that when he got to Vienna, he changed his mind. He doesn't even have to say it. He doesn't have to say anything, and I can't help it. But then, he should be on his own.

Why? Because there has been no such thing as a Jewish refugee since 1948, since the State of Israel. What is a refugee? A refugee is someone who runs away from where he lives and has no place to go. A stateless person is a refugee. The Vietnamese are refugees. The Hungarians were refugees, the Poles. But not the Jews. First of all, the Jews come out on Israeli visas. He gives up his Russian citizenship based on his Israeli visa, and Israel receives him. We pay for him. We pay for his passport in Russia, we take care of him, we bring him to Israel. So how can he be a refugee?

But if there is no such thing as a Jewish refugee, then the situation is completely different from what it was in the old times, when we were cheating governments and bribing consuls and so forth. Let's be clear about this. One of the arguments the people who disagree with me use is that the emigrant has the moral right to use the Israeli visa even if he knows he's not going to Israel—after all, we've been doing that kind of thing forever. But this is different. This is an Israeli visa, it's not a fiction, it's not a forgery. We are here for him. He's not a refugee.

So I say, while I can't force him, if he doesn't want to come to us, he's on his own.

And to be on his own means that he doesn't get assistance. Because what does the assistance mean? It means that we are competing. And I have to admit—we can't compete with America. And I tell you that if he's on his own, he will come to Israel.

I was in Vienna three times. And I interviewed a number of the Russians, and I asked them all one question: What would happen if you didn't have the possibility of going to the United States? Would you come to Israel? Of course they would come to Israel. I had only one case that was different, a young boy from Kiev who told me that if he could go only to Israel, he would rather stay in Kiev. And I said, in a remark which was widely misinterpreted, that if he wants to stay in Kiev, he is responsible for his own fate, not me.

Freedom of choice, yes. But freedom of choice does not oblige me to help, when by helping, I enter into a competition between Israel and the United States. I can't compete.

LEONARD SCHROETER

Moment,

Over 200,000 Jews have been permitted to leave the USSR since the contemporary Jewish movement began in 1967. As I write, in mid-1979, virtually all of the Leningrad trial defendants have been freed, and most of the Prisoners of Conscience and Movement leaders I discussed in *The Last Exodus* now live in Israel, their heroic period behind them, pursuing more or less normal lives except for the permanent emotional scars left by long years in the Gulag. The most intractable refusenik cases have proved not to be "impossible" at all.

Yet, as of this writing, it would appear that 50,000 to 60,000 Jews may be released from the USSR during 1979—by far the largest annual emigration in the history of the USSR. Most of these (perhaps 65-70 percent) are expected to choose the United States as their ultimate haven. The raw statistics, however, do not tell more than a small part of the meaningful story, do not provide us with the historical perspective which alone makes the Soviet Jewry Movement comprehensible. It is certainly relevant, for example, that the Soviet Jews who came to Israel, became Israeli citizens, and then left—i.e., those who became *yordim* (Jewish emigrants from Israel)—are still much less than 10 percent of those who became *olim* (Jewish immigrants to Israel). This is in marked contrast to *olim* from Western countries who leave Israel at a ratio five to ten times higher than that of Soviet *olim*. Further, the number of *yordim* among Israeli-born Jews has increased. There are now approximately as many *yordim* as *olim* each year, and many times more Israeli *yordim* in America than there are American *olim* in Israel. Viewed in this context, the Zionist steadfastness of the Soviet Jewish Movement remains remarkably high in contrast to overall Jewish constancy toward Israel.

Between 1880 and 1925 (when open emigration to the United States was halted), over 2.5 million Jews, about one-third of the Jewish population of Eastern Europe, came to America. During the same period, despite the ideological and political activity of Zionist parties in all Eastern European Jewish communities, less than a tenth of that number emigrated to Palestine, and a large percentage of those emigrants left the rigors of that life, often moving on to America. Today, after more than thirty years of Jewish statehood, more than five times as many Israelis are living in the United States and Canada than there are American Jews living in Israel. Frustrating and disappointing as these facts are to many Zionists, they constitute a central reality of modern Jewish history. Denigrating epithets such as

"*noshrim*" (dropouts), employed with alacrity in recent years to those Soviet Jews who, receiving Israel exit visas, choose Western countries rather than Israel, not only fail to reverse the trend, they show a lack of comprehension of Jewish history and the basic human right of free choice.

Within the past century, during which freedom of movement has become increasingly technically feasible, Jews have moved from lands of oppression to lands of opportunity, when the country of oppression permitted migrations and the country of opportunity accepted immigrants. In such migrations the opportunity for full religious expression has been much less important than the opportunity for a college degree. Political Zionism—a land of one's own—has been much less important than a house or business of one's own. Much of the Jewish migration of the past century has been by East European Jews, from lands now within the present territorial boundaries of the USSR.

Contrary to the early hopes and illusions, the majority of Soviet Jews, like the majority of their ancestors and like the majority of other Jews from other lands, are *not* Zionists, despite the Holocaust and the foundation and continued existence of the State of Israel. (Since it is commonly said that most Jews have become Zionists, it should be noted that I mean by Zionism a commitment to live in Israel, not simply financial, political, and moral support of that country.)

Although in the early years almost 100 percent of Soviet Jews came as *olim*, casting their lot with the Jewish state and rejecting life in the USSR or any part of the diaspora, after 1973 in increasing numbers those who emigrated voted with their feet to go West. This development led to hysterical, insensitive, extreme reactions from Israeli and Jewish Agency officials. The first manifestation of this was the effort mounted to compel organized Jewish communities to deny any economic assistance to impoverished Soviet Jews who, having come to Israel, decided to live elsewhere. This was followed by a brutal insistence that funds be totally denied *noshrim*. This astonishing abdication of century-old Jewish community commitment to aid the poor and oppressed was justified to obsequious sycophants in diaspora countries by asserting that Soviet Jews had perpetrated a fraud by accepting visas to Israel and then going to the West. This sophistry ultimately failed, since it was well known that for the Soviet Union the ideology of "repatriation" to Israel and the concept of family reunification were merely convenient rationalizations for the current emigration policy. The regime even used the *repatriation pretext* when it issued exit visas to Israel for non-Jews who had publicly indicated their intent to go West. It has been

obvious that the Israeli visa is a comforting fiction to Soviet authorities, and is a pragmatic mechanism for Jewish rescue from the USSR. The continued rejection of Israeli and Jewish Agency pressures to deny funds to Soviet Jews who do not go to Israel can only be counted as a triumph for traditional Jewish values.

November 2, 1979

U.S. TO PRESS FOR FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF HELSINKI ACT

NEW YORK, Nov. 1 (JTA) -- A key U.S. State Department official announced that the Administration will press for further implementation of the security provisions of the Helsinki Final Act when the signatories meet in Madrid in November, 1980.

Matthew Nimetz, U.S. State Department Counselor, in a luncheon address before the Leadership Conference of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, said that while the United States retains its overriding interest in the human rights and humanitarian affairs provisions of the Final Act, the U.S. delegation to the review meeting in Madrid will seek to enhance the implementation of the security area, in order to achieve a "balanced basis" that would enhance all provisions of the document.

The Helsinki Final Act, which was signed by the leaders of the U.S., Canada and 33 European nations, including the Soviet Union on Aug. 1, 1975, recognized the interrelationship of security in Europe and security in the rest of the world and the necessity of general disarmament under effective international controls.

Addressing more than 100 religious leaders representing Protestant, Evangelical, Catholic, Orthodox and Jewish communities from across the country, Nimetz said that the Administration was well aware of the great importance of the interest shown by private groups in the Helsinki review process and "encourages their participation and deeper commitment to this process, especially in the human rights area."

Poor Record Of Soviet Compliance

In a message to the Leadership Conference, Rep. Robert Drinan (D., Mass.), noted that activists in the Soviet Union seeking Soviet compliance with the Helsinki Act's human rights provisions, "remain behind bars or are substantially denied due process of Soviet law. Among them: Anatoly Shcharansky, Yuri Orlov, Vladimir Slepak, Ida Nudel and Nahum Meiman."

Though the number of exit visas granted to Soviet Jews has risen, Drinan continued, "Soviet officials are presently conducting a systematic campaign of harassment against those seeking to leave the Soviet Union. Mail and telephone communications are censored or cut off completely, job security is threatened and some activists are being forced into the Soviet armed forces upon application to leave."

The demands now being made by Soviet Jews and other minorities are "crucial in the event that during the upcoming 1980 Moscow Olympics, the Soviet Union may take every opportunity to silence the dissident community," Drinan said. "If SALT II is ratified, the Most Favored Nation status granted the Soviets, once the Olympics have passed, we could lose our leverage in influencing Soviet behavior."

A supporter of SALT II, Drinan said that the U.S. and private groups must continue to insure that Soviet Jews will be allowed to leave the Soviet Union in accordance with internationally accepted standards of emigration and family reunification. After the conference, an interreligious vigil was conducted at the Isaiah Wall across from the United Nations.

ANGUISHED CRIES OF EXILES GO UNNOTICED

AIM REPORT

Soviet academician and Nobel Prize winner Andrei Sakharov sent a message from Moscow to the International Sakharov Hearings that were held in Washington, D.C. from September 26 through 29. Sakharov, who has been one of the giants in the struggle for human rights in the Soviet Union, said that "openness and publicity" should be the main weapon in the defense of human rights. He said: "I hope that the mass communications media, including Western radio stations broadcasting to the Soviet Union, will devote their attention to the hearings and will convey detailed information about them to people living in the West, in the USSR, and in Eastern Europe."

Sakharov and the many prominent Soviet exiles who assembled in Washington to expose the terrible human rights conditions prevailing in the Soviet Union today were sadly disappointed. The American media virtually ignored these impressive hearings, which heard testimony from over 60 witnesses, much of it information not previously reported.

The Washington Post, which has always displayed a very keen interest in human rights—in such countries as Chile—ran a story about the hearings in its "Style" section under the headline, "Remembering Russia." Vladimir Bukovsky, who has spent a major part of his young life in Soviet prisons or psychiatric wards for dissidents, commented acidly that the Post had relegated its story on the hearings to a part of the paper devoted to "vogues and fashions." We are not a fad or fashion, he said. In any case, the story was not a news story, but largely a piece about how a lot of Soviet exiles were meeting and reminiscing.

Nothing more about the hearings appeared in the Post until three days later when former Moscow correspondent Robert Kaiser succeeded in breaking through the indifference of the Post's editors. However, the headline writer continued on the reminiscence theme, putting this headline on the story: "Soviet Dissidents Tell Stories of Life in the Motherland." And one has to wonder what it was that put quotes around the word "testimony," which Kaiser had used to describe the evidence presented of Soviet human rights violations. Kaiser, who had done a good job of reporting on the dissidents when he served as Moscow correspondent for the Washington Post, reported that the participants "were livid with the Washington media for all but ignoring them." He said that a "Russian-speaking reporter," obviously himself, "was barraged with hostile comments and hurt expressions."

And well they might have. At the time, The New York Times and The Washington Star had not so much as mentioned the fact that the hearings were even taking place. NBC had given a brief report on the evening news of the opening session, but otherwise American television had ignored the event. At a press conference on September 28, Reed Irvine, editor of the AIM Report, asked Bukovsky and Ginzburg if they agreed with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's criticisms of Western media in view of the absolutely miserable coverage that had so far been given to the Sakharov hearings. Bukovsky assailed the Post for treating this serious hearing as "a vogue and fashion." Ginzburg, who was only recently released from the Gulag, suggested waiting one more day to see if Solzhenitsyn had been

The blackout of this important meeting was worse than a slight to some of the great heroes of our day. It was a blow to the cause of human rights, because it seemed to signal to the Soviet Union that the American news media have lost interest in this subject—even to the point of refusing to publish appeals for the release of seriously ill prisoners of the stature of Anatoly Scharansky and Yuri Orlov.

What You Can Do

All the Big Media deserve criticism for their treatment of this important story. The Times was most disappointing, actually killing the only story on the hearings that it had run in its early Sunday edition. Write to Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, Chairman, The New York Times, New York, N.Y. 10036. ABC News was the only network that did absolutely nothing. Write Leonard H. Goldenson, Chairman, ABC, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019.

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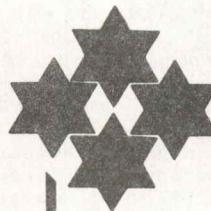
November 7, 1979

INSIDE TODAY'S ALERT

* The issue of the so-called "drop-outs" is being hotly debated again. Our commentary is on page 1. Reprints of articles representing several different viewpoints start on page 5.

* News of the Prisoners of Conscience on page 2 includes information on a new book of testimony by former Prisoners of Conscience about life in a Soviet Prison.

* Refuseniks in Leningrad appeal to the U.S. Senate to help a Muscovite friend. See page 3.



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