



INFORMATION FROM THE
UNION OF COUNCILS FOR SOVIET JEWS
1411 K STREET, NW, SUITE 402
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005
(202) 393-4117

Lynn Singer, PRESIDENT
Claudia Zorn, EDITOR

ALERT

Vol. IX No. 25

December 28, 1983

December Letter from Shcharansky: Immediate Hospitalization Required

In a letter dated December 1st, Anatoly Shcharansky detailed his deteriorating health status which Soviet authorities have virtually ignored. Despite appeals by his mother Ida Milgrom since Sukkot, last October, Shcharansky continues to endure a weakened heart muscle and frequent chest pains which "range from annoying to piercing", as well as diminished use of his left hand.

While Shcharansky has repeated allergic reactions to the medications he is receiving, Soviet authorities have not made any effort to hospitalize him. Shcharansky wrote that with such acute pain, he "worries about not fulfilling his work quota."

"All efforts must be exerted as rapidly as possible for the immediate hospitalization of Anatoly Shcharansky," affirmed UCSJ President Lynn Singer, adding that hundreds of telegrams have been issued by the forty UCSJ member councils across the country and affiliates abroad. Telegrams "should continue" to be sent to: Minister of Interior, Vitaly Fedorchuk, 6 Ogareva St., Moscow 103009, RSFSR, USSR.

Telegrams should also be sent to the Camp Commandant Romanov,

Anatoly Shcharansky



Chistopol Prison, Uchr. 5110/1 ue.,
Moscow, USSR.

Despite his serious ill health, Anatoly Shcharansky remains vigilant in his commitment to Judaism. Lighting candles on Chanukah, Anatoly writes that his observance "made him feel at one with his wife Avital," although noting that his photos of her were recently confiscated.

SOVIET FLIP-FLOP

Inna Elbert Fired

Inna Elbert of Kiev, the courageous wife of Prisoner of Conscience Lev Elbert, has been fired from her job for "absenteeism", the UCSJ learned this week.

Inna's six-week hunger strike last Fall in protest of the accusations against her husband left her very ill with liver damage. Last month, Inna had a small heart attack. Although home for a short time to recover, Soviet authorities in both Moscow and Kiev had assured Inna that she would have her job when she returned to work.

Shocked by the "flip-flop" and injustice of such an action, UCSJ President Lynn Singer stated: "As long as Lev Elbert remains in prison, Inna Elbert is the sole supporter of her family. She and her young son Carmi have been deprived of the right to survive.

"The firing of Inna Elbert is obviously a continuation of the Soviets' campaign against the Elberts," said Singer.

Interest Increases for IPG: Members of Parliaments Signed From 11 Countries

Support for the recently-formed UCSJ International Parliamentary Group on Human Rights in the Soviet Union (IPG) reached new heights last week. Participation now total over sixty Members of Parliament from eleven countries and well over 100 United States Congressmen and Senators, according to IPG Executive Director Paul W. Meek.

"Our meetings with MPs in Great Britain, France, the Republic of Ireland, and the Federal Republic of Germany were met with an absolutely positive response," affirmed UCSJ President Lynn Singer, who returned from Europe in early December after a "highly successful" recruiting effort on behalf of IPG.

"The increasing interest in participating in IPG is particularly encouraging in light of the Soviet government's 're-Stalinization,'" Singer noted, referring to the new law to extend terms for Prisoners of Conscience. Noted Members of Parliament who agreed to join IPG and to assist in recruiting additional Members included Lord Foot and his brother Michael who had been a candidate for Prime Minister in England's last election.

UPDATE on Godyak

Jewish refusenik Valery Godyak was released after being arrested by Soviet authorities for "resistance". Jewish leader and activist of the Moscow unofficial peace movement, Olga Yerusalimskaya-Medvedkov, and computer scientist Olga Lusnikova were also released, although it appears that both Godyak and Lusnikova could be forced to act as witnesses in a trial against Yerusalimskaya.

UPDATE on Finkelstein

Long-term refusenik Eitan Finkelstein, who received permission last month, arrived in Israel December 18. Prior to leaving the Soviet Union, Soviet authorities indicated that "they did not have the papers" for his exit visa. Nevertheless, "next year in Jerusalem" has become a reality for Finkelstein and his family. A number of people were at the airport to greet the Finkelsteins before they went to an absorption center in Ramat Gan.

NEWSBRIEFS

REFUSENIK YAKOV GORODETSKY's phone was disconnected by Soviet authorities.

IDA NUDEL is suffering from exhaustion due to harsh weather conditions in Bendery.

On November 27, the Annual Memorial Services at **RUMBULA** were grossly interrupted by Soviet authorities driving trucks with loud speakers playing raucous music. Soviet Jews attending the service — only 30 people as compared with 100 in previous years — were unable to recite the Kadish (mourners' prayer) due to the annoyances. Rumbula is the site where thirty-two thousand Jews of Riga were put in a ghetto and later shot in the Rubula Forest during the Nazi regime.

Wife of playwright **LEONID KELBERT**, **MARINA KELBERT**, is in the hospital suffering from hypertension. SEND GET-WELL CARDS TO: USSR/RSFSR/LENINGRAD 193012/2nd Rabfakovsky 5/2/Apt. 57.

Los Angeles City Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky recently issued an invitation to Jewish refusenik **YAKOV MESH** to be his guest for the 1984 Olympic Games. Yaroslavsky was formerly the Director of the Southern California Council for Soviet Jews prior to his election.

CHAIM ELBERT, **INNA**, **MIKHAIL** and young **CARMI** visited **LEV** at the prison. Lev is having trouble with his eyes due to the work he has been given. He has since been given another job. SEND LETTERS OF SUPPORT TO INNA: DR. MIZRUCHINA-ELBERT, Volgradskaya Street 6, Apt. 33, Kiev, Ukrainian SSR, USSR.

In a Chanukah celebration in Washington, D.C., **PRESIDENT REAGAN** declared that "today Soviet Jews are fighting for their future and their freedom as the Maccabees once did; but their fight is a peaceful one." The President pledged that "we will not remain silent" in helping Soviet Jews in their struggle to emigrate or in their effort to practice their religion in the Soviet Union.

New UCSJ refusenik case: **BORIS** and **NATASHA VEKKER** of Leningrad speak excellent English, and wish to receive letters. WRITE TO THEM AT: USSR/Leningrad/Prospect Marshala Zaharova 27-3-272/

POLINA PARITSKY'S husband is no longer in the hospital, but has been declared a 3rd degree invalid.

P.O.C. STANISLAV ZUBKO, who was arrested a few years ago on "drug" charges, has been transferred to a NEW PRISON CAMP: Isiaslavmx 324/31-12-122, Lhmelnitskaya Oblast 2812000

P.O.C. VICTOR BRAILOVSKY'S son, Leonid, was again refused permission under the pretext that his father is still in exile.

YURI TARNOPOLOWSKY has arrived in poor health at the prison camp in Chita Province. SEND LETTERS OF CONCERN TO: 672022 CHITA, P/A YA G14/6, 5th Group.

Editorial

IPG & Coalition Politics Goal: human freedoms

We live in a world of coalition politics. Legislative issues continue to be defined by the association of seemingly disparate interest groups, coalescing for the purpose of a particular legislative goal or concern.

The concern for human rights, personal freedom and human dignity in the Soviet Union can be best expressed in unison through a coalition. Today, against enormous odds, the cry for human freedom persists in the USSR. Soviet Jews are living in dangerous times, caught in the Catch-22 situation of inhumane policies and arbitrary sentences. We think of those who symbolize this struggle: Yuri Tarnopolsky; Lev Elbert; Simon Shnirman; Yakov Mesh; obviously Anatoly Shcharansky. We hear of the courage of these men, and many others in the Soviet Union, who refuse to compromise on their Jewishness despite the harsh reaction this evokes from the Russian authorities.

Religious persecution in the Soviet Union has touched on Baptists and Pentecostals as well as Jews. The free flow of information and human contacts between the West and the USSR is severely curtailed. Radio jamming, telephone and postal interruptions are commonplace in the Soviet Union. Such dangerous times for those in the USSR spell the loss of human rights.

This past year has been particularly ominous. Yet, when the emigration figures diminished, when the Soviet-sanctioned Anti-Zionist Committee was established, when the Soviet government passed a harsh sentence on Hebrew teacher Josef Begun, we in the United States responded: activism on human rights issues has always been a constant thread in the fabric of American politics.

Members of Congress continue to write letters to Moscow, participate in vigils on behalf of Prisoners of Conscience and refuseniks, join the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, and be a part of UCSJ-sponsored congressional delegations to the Soviet Union — all actions which

are prompted by their constituents' concerns expressed through public opinion.

Outside the United States, parliamentarians also respond to their constituents. Often, however, we are unaware of each other's efforts, and consequently may not be achieving maximum efficiency in responding to Soviet oppression. Clearly, we must move towards a unified Western approach in advocating human rights in the Soviet Union, drawing upon the momentum established at the Madrid Review Conference to monitor compliance with the Helsinki Accords.

To this end, Senators Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ) together with House Representatives Tom Lantos (D-CA), John Edward Porter (R-IL), and Gus Yatron (D-PA), have co-sponsored a voluntary association, a coalition if you will, of Members of Congress and Parliamentarians in other countries to act as a conduit for providing coordination of human rights activi-

ties.

The International Parliamentary Group for Human Rights in the Soviet Union has tremendous potential to promote a unified Western response to Soviet human rights abuses. To join with Western Europe, Israel, Canada and other nations is to apply the concept of coalition politics towards the goal of human freedom for victims of Soviet repression.

Ambassador Max Kampelman, the Chairman of the U.S. Delegation to the Madrid Conference, has observed that our competition with the Soviet Union is really a "struggle for the hearts and minds of all peoples." Through the International Parliamentary Group for Human Rights in the Soviet Union, members will show the Soviet government that public opinion, as expressed through the activism of parliaments, demands the Soviets' adherence to international obligations if it is to be considered a responsible member of the international community.

-C.Z.

Letters

Russian Jews are in constant danger

While I was in Washington, D.C. a few days ago I met an old friend, Dr. Lev Ulanovsky, to whom I used to write when he was a refusenik in Moscow.

While we were there we received word that a mutual friend in Moscow, Josef Begun, was sentenced to a term of seven years in prison followed by five years of Siberian exile for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." His crime: teaching Hebrew to Jewish students in his Moscow apartment. This is a subversive activity in the eyes of Soviet authorities, as are all Jewish cultural and religious activities.

Such harsh and arbitrary treatment is the result of a vicious and crude anti-Semitic propaganda campaign that has been waged in the Soviet press in recent months, propaganda that has inspired provocations, harassment, and even physical attacks against Jews throughout the U.S.S.R.

This is a particularly brutal sentence for a kind, gentle and harmless 51-year-old man who has already served one prison and exile sentence for "parasitism" (when he lost his job after applying for an exit visa to emigrate to Israel), and then another prison and exile term for violating the internal passport regulations when he tried to return to his Moscow home at the end of his first term of exile.

What is even more significant

about what has happened to Josef Begun is the fact that the trial was not held in a Soviet courtroom, as is required under Soviet law. Instead, the Soviet judge travelled to the prison where Josef was being held (and still is), and conducted a closed trial in a prison anteroom. More than 100 KGB (secret police) agents stood outside the prison gates to make sure there would be no access for Josef's family, friends or foreign reporters.

Must we wait until Josef Begun dies in prison (as he probably will) before the U.S. press and public take note and we express our outrage? Or Shcharansky? Or Orlov? Or Paritsky? Or Tarnopolsky? Or Podrabinek? Or the dozens of other prisoners of conscience?

Must we wait until the pogroms and killings start before American Christians stand with their Jewish brothers and sisters to call the world's attention to Soviet human rights abuses?

I sincerely hope not. But such evil will continue to flourish, and all of us will be morally weakened by it, as long as we stand silent as a nation, and as long as so many people continue to believe as if this were solely a Jewish problem.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the situation faced by Soviet Jews today is frighteningly reminiscent of the situation faced by German Jews in 1937. Their friends in the U.S. are beginning to fear for their physical safety.

Yet what is so distressing to me is that the U.S. press took little note of what happened to

Jeff Colvin
Los Alamos

Jeff Colvin, Member of UCSJ Board

Santa Fe New Mexican, Nov. 9, 1983

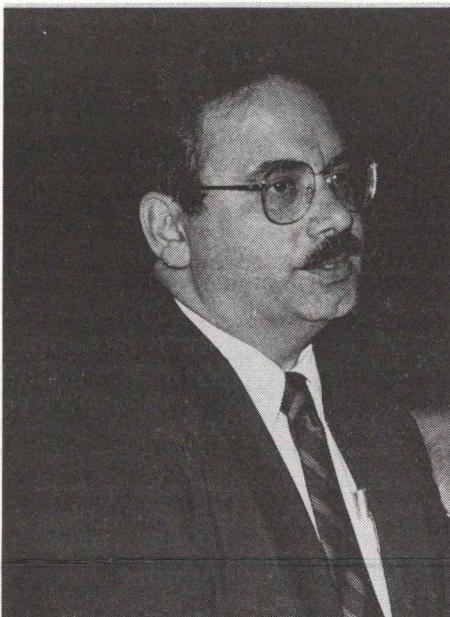
A Plea From An Activist

"Revive Every Muscle"

...The Soviet Union has got to understand that this is not a cocktail conversation in the United States. One of the tragedies of American life and American Jewish life is we get tired of things. We get bored... as if we have the right to decide that we can lay off because we're bored with it. That's exactly what the Soviets are counting on.

The kind of intelligent, steadfast, steady kind of drumbeat on behalf of the people who are suffering is our agenda together. So you must... revive every muscle and every sinew of your soul and get anyone you can to 'schlep' along, and start writing again, start carrying placards again. It may sound trite, but it ain't..."

Mark Talisman, Former aide to Rep. Charles Vanik, in an address at the UCSJ Annual Meeting, October 1983.



Mark Talisman



P.O.C. Simon Shnirman



UNION OF COUNCILS FOR SOVIET JEWS

1411 K STREET, NW, SUITE 402
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

Inside Today's Alert

Soviet Flip-Flop:

Inna Elbert Fired From Job..... page 1

Shcharansky: Urgent Appeal page 1

Interest Increases for IPG Page 1

Editorial—

IPG & Coalition Politics..... page 3

1984:

"Revive Every Muscle" page 4

The **Alert** is published by the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, an organization dedicated to helping the Jews of the Soviet Union, especially those desiring to leave.

Editor: Claudia Zorn.

President: Lynn Singer. Vice Presidents: Hinda Cantor, Pam Cohen, Ruth Newman, Morey Schapira.

A letter from Kerch

Only A Moment's Happiness

Dearest Lorna:

I am really upset you've not received several of my letters. Perhaps it is the post's fault. The last letter had Yana's photo and my photo too. Pity you've not received it. I send you another one, not so good as preceding. In the letters I wrote you everything about Simon and our meeting. We were together two days and nights. It was happiness for us both. Besides, Simon had a chance to meet his daughter, to play with her. He works hard but never loses his presence of mind. We'll have a short meet(ing, but) I am happy to have the opportunity to talk for two hours. This time I won't take the child. It is very cold there . . . if it is not very difficult and expensive for you to send a nipple that shows the child's temperature is higher than normal. It is very useful during the winter with its colds . . . My love to you.

Yours, Leah Shnirman
Kerch, Ukrainian SSR, USSR

Edit. note: Yana Shnirman was born in November, 1983.