



INFORMATION FROM THE
UNION OF COUNCILS FOR SOVIET JEWS
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005
(202) 393-4117

Lynn Singer, PRESIDENT
Claudia Zorn, EDITOR

ALERT

Vol. IX No. 23

December 1, 1983



Inna Elbert

On Aug. 1, Inna Elbert declared a hunger strike in protest of the accusations against her husband. She remained fasting for almost six weeks, despite doctors' warnings of irreparable damage. The UCSJ has learned that Inna is very ill due to recent liver damage.



Lev Elbert

Refusenik Remains on Hunger Strike; Soviet "Promises" Don't Materialize

Vladimir and Anna Livshits of Leningrad began a hunger strike November 7, "to let the world know about their plight as Jews in the Soviet Union." Frustrated by several refusals since 1981 to emigrate to Israel and join family there, Vladimir Livshits insists they will remain on their hunger strike "until death if necessary".

Vladimir, a scientist of applied mathematics and economics, and his wife Anna, an engineer, both lost their jobs after they first applied for a visa in 1981.

Emigration Sinks to a New Low

Soviet emigration in 1983 has dropped dramatically. Ninety-one Jews left the Soviet Union in October, the lowest monthly figure since January. This brings the total for the year to 1,162—less than half that for the first ten months of 1982.

UCSJ President Lynn Singer responded: "While we are deeply concerned with the repercussions associated with the Livshits' decision, we understand their frustrations. We must unceasingly work for the Livshits family until their visa to emigrate is secure."

In an effort to dissuade Livshits and his wife from continuing their hunger strike, Soviet authorities recently offered Vladimir assistance in finding a job, and indicated that they would "expedite his papers" if he would first stop his hunger strike.

Skeptical of Soviet "promises" and resolute in his decision, Vladimir was unswayed by the Soviets' request.

Singer spoke with Vladimir Livshits by telephone and learned that despite Soviet authorities' sending him to a certain plant for a job, Livshits was told that "there was no job for him" when he arrived at the site. In addition, all his telegrams to President Andropov were routed to the Leningrad OVIR, which confirmed the government's refusal to issue Livshits

**Prisoner of Conscience
Lev Elbert of Kiev:**

Charges Dropped

"Public Outcry" Credited

The trumped-up charges of "drug possession" against Kiev Prisoner of Conscience Lev Elbert have been dropped, the UCSJ learned November 10. Upon hearing the encouraging news, UCSJ President Lynn Singer responded: "In these ominous times for Jews in the Soviet Union, public outcry can make the difference." UCSJ members and councils across the country had been sending thousands of telegrams on behalf of Elbert to protest the Soviets' false charges.

Elbert was sentenced last May to one year in prison for "evasion of army draft by a reservist". He refused to comply with the draft order unless he received assurances that he would not be denied an exit visa to Israel on the pretext of "state secrets acquired in the Army," as had occurred with his original application to emigrate. Lev Elbert, his wife Inna, and their son Carmi, have been refused permission to emigrate to Israel since 1976.

In late August, Elbert was accused of "drug possession" — a charge which would have added an additional five years of imprisonment. Inna Elbert then began a hunger strike that lasted almost six weeks, as "a last resort to establish justice and to prove that even 'people on the street' can show innocence against the scheme to crush her and her family," stated Lev Elbert's brother Mikhail, who confirmed the news that the charges had been dropped, but reiterated that a written confirmation was due in ten days.

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NEWSBRIEFS

FELIKS KOCHUBYEVSKY recently appealed to reduce his prison sentence. He was told that his crime is severe and he does not deserve a reduction in his sentence. SEND TELEGRAMS OF PROTEST TO: USSR/618500 Solikamsk/2-Permstaya Oblast/p/ya 389/15/otriad 1, grigada 13.

VLADIMIR SLEPAK received a registration permit for Moscow.

ALEXANDER PARTISKY, who was last reported to be in a camp hospital suffering from a heart condition, was moved to Ulan Ude, a prison hospital. SEND TELEGRAMS TO: USSR/RSFSR/Moscow 103009/Ogareva St. 6/Ministry of Internal Affairs /Camps and Prisons/Central Medical Dept.

ANATOLY VASSILEVSKY, depressed about his diminishing eye sight, has been put in a psychiatric hospital. SEND TELEGRAMS TO HIS WIFE, NATASHA, AT: Third Vladamirskaya 26-1, Apt. 6, Moscow 129626.

MISCHA RATNER-BIALY, son of Refusenik Judith Ratner, has had a b'rit milah. SEND CONGRATULATIONS TO: USSR/RSFSR/Moscow 117342/Butlerova 24/Apt. 41.

JOSEF BEGUN has been attacked in a Vladimir regional Communist Party newspaper as a person who chose "the road of serious crimes against the USSR". Dr. Begun is preparing to appeal his sentence, but has been unable to find an attorney who would risk helping him. Sustained, systematic pressure for Begun is an absolute necessity. SEND TELEGRAMS TO: Ambassador Anatoly Dobrinin/Soviet Embassy/1125 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

MISHA TARATUTA, of Leningrad was released from the army and is now with his family.

TAMARA LIVSHITS, wife of Semyon, received another refusal.

SAMUEL RUTENBERG, of Leningrad received permission.

ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY's health deteriorates. (See back page)

SHLOMO GOTMAN, of Leningrad, received permission.

INNA ELBERT returned to Kiev.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher pledged her "absolute support" to ease the plight of Soviet Jewry to members of the Presidium of the World Conference on Soviet Jewry, held the first week of November.

DECEMBER 10 is Human Rights Day. Show your support for our friends in the Soviet Union by participating in events through your local councils.

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 7 is Chanukah. As we light a candle each night, we rededicate ourselves to the Soviet Jewish heroes whose courage and determination embody the spirit of Chanukah.

Local Council Challenges Business Leader on Human Rights

Intermountain Jewish News — New Year Edition

September 2, 1983

OPEN LETTER TO ARMAND HAMMER

Dr. Hammer:

More than any person alive today **you** are in a position of influence with the Soviet Government!

Your Occidental Petroleum Company alone is engaged in a 20 billion dollar business with the Soviet Union!

You have had the ear of every Soviet leader from Lenin to Andropov!

You certainly must be aware that the Soviet Union continues to blatantly violate every International Human Rights agreement to which they are signatories.

The world's foremost champion of Human Rights, Dr. Andrei Sakharov, has repeatedly requested that Western trade be conditioned on Human Rights.

The promotion of International Human Rights is a major priority of the United States.

Since **you** are an American and most recently have been depicted as a Human Rights activist, we have the right to expect you to use your influence with Mr. Andropov **now** toward achieving the following humanitarian goals:

- 1. The release of Anatoly Scharansky and the other 50 Helsinki monitors who are in Soviet prisons, labor camps, "psychiatric hospitals," or internal exile, for having organized to monitor their government's compliance to the Helsinki agreement.
- 2. Visas for the thousands of Soviet Jews waiting five years or more for their right to emigrate.
- 3. The cessation of harassment of Jewish culturists and Hebrew teachers in the Soviet Union.
- 4. That the absurd charges against Hebrew teachers Yosef Begun and Lev Elbert be dropped and visas be granted immediately.
- 5. The release of Prisoners of Conscience — Jews and others imprisoned for their religion and / or attempts to emigrate.

"SILENT WITNESS TO CRIMES (AGAINST HUMANITY) THAT MAY BE PREVENTED, CONSTITUTES COMPLICITY IN THOSE CRIMES."

COLORADO COMMITTEE OF CONCERN FOR SOVIET JEWRY,

22 South Jersey St.,
Denver, Colorado 80224
322-7943

Please send letters of support to:

USSR/Leningrad 197022/Kirovsky Prospect 64-3-139/ Vladimir & Anna Livshits

UCSJ Holds Western Regional Mtg Jan. '84

The UCSJ will hold their Western regional conference in San Francisco, California, January 27-29, at the Fairmont Hotel. The weekend will include programmatic workshops, special speakers on Soviet Jewry, strategy planning, and seminars. Plan now to attend in January. Contact the Union of Councils' office (202) 393-4117 for more specific information.

Please send telegrams to:

Leningrad OVIR/USSR/Zhelabova St., 26/Vorotynsev Vyacheslav M. Chailovich

Please send letters of protest to:

Yuri Andropov/President of the USSR/Kremlin, Moscow, RSFSR

Charges Dropped

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"The spurious charges were dropped after the very careful investigation of the case by the Procurator's office in Kiev under the supervision of the Procurator General of the USSR, which found insufficient evidence against Elbert.

In Moscow, there was great celebration among the refusenik community; grown men even shed tears.

In a fate thought sealed, the wide commitment for Lev Elbert did make the difference.

Rep. Berman Seeks to Link Human Rights With International Trade Law

Amendment Passes House:

Trouble expected in Senate

On October 19, an amendment to the reauthorization of the Export Administration Act passed the full House of Representatives. The amendment, authored by Congressman Howard Berman (D-CA) maintains presidential authority to impose trade sanctions and abrogate existing contracts under certain conditions, one of which is "gross violations of human rights".

Rep. Berman spoke with UCSJ Assoc. Direc. for Communications, Claudia Zorn, about the background of the amendment and the likelihood for passage:

ALERT: What is the thrust of the Amendment?

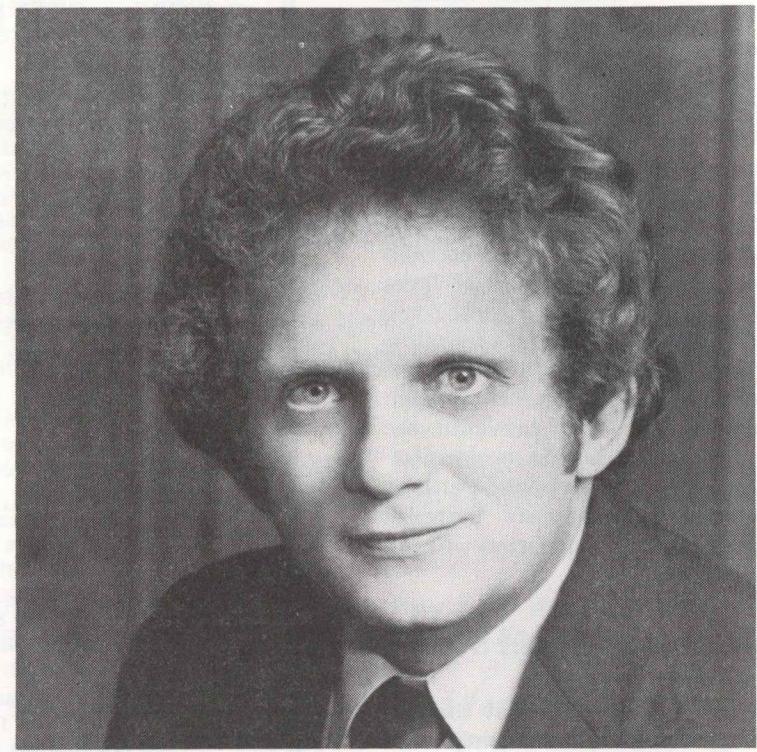
BERMAN: Under certain limited situations, the President retains his power to impose economic sanctions, including sanctions that would interfere with an existing commercial contract. It's a balance. The President now has full authority to impose those sanctions, (but) the business community has mounted a tremendous campaign to try to prohibit the President from ever affecting an existing commercial contract.

ALERT: Are there other interests, such as human rights, which are compatible with "contract sanctity"?

BERMAN: I'm amused by the reverence that is paid to "contract sanctity". I thought in this country we had come to a conclusion a number of years ago that certain basic human rights had a higher priority in our scale of values than the rights of some businessman to continue to make a profit by supplying materials which would help to support forces that want to trample on human rights.

ALERT: What countries did you have in mind at the time you introduced the bill?

BERMAN: Certainly, the Soviet Union is foremost. I'm not saying automatically and in every situation, economic sanctions are the right weapon. I want to preserve Presidential authority to utilize those sanctions at the appropriate times.



Rep. Howard Berman: "Basic human rights . . . a higher priority . . ."

ALERT: What would be the mechanism to implement this amendment? Who would have the responsibility to determine the conditions that justify the President's authority to impose sanctions?

BERMAN: The President would retain the authority he has now, under the situations (proscribed in the amendment) to impose those sanctions by executive action. The one addition we make to the burdens on the President is the obligation to consult with Congress and consult with our Western allies. That is important to make those sanctions more effective. The pipeline sanctions were meaningless, in large part because of the way the President implemented them. He imposed the sanctions after the squashing of Solidarity and the imposition of Marshall law in Poland, without trying to develop a common agenda with our Western allies. The result was that the sanctions probably hampered what we were trying to do, rather than help. I want to see consultations, but I don't want (to see) one filibustering Senator who may have a spare parts plant in his district be

able to tie up the President's ability to impose sanctions on countries who have a pattern of human rights violations.

ALERT: Who will be reporting human rights violations to the attention of the President?

BERMAN: That is the responsibility of all of us in terms of our interests, to utilize official channels, direct communications.

ALERT: Is this amendment simple a "sense of Congress"?

BERMAN: This amendment is not a panacea. The bill does not automatically elevate human rights to the top level of the President's concerns, but it does say that we are able to call to his attention what is going on in the world, persuade him, and that he will have the authority to impose trade sanctions.

ALERT: Who has been supporting your amendment?

BERMAN: It is a broad coalition. I had the direct support of the Southern California Council for Soviet Jews, a member of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews. I also had support from the Administration who wants to retain this power.

1983: An Anniversary Year for US-Soviet Relations

A half-century of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the United States was recognized in Moscow and in Washington, on Nov. 16.

Long time diplomats from both nations agreed that relations are at their "lowest ebb".

On November 12, 1982, two days after the death of Leonid Brezhnev, 69-year old Yuri Andropov took over as General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party.

From a *U.S. News & World Report* cover story on "Andropov, A Year of Failure", a look at the Soviet Union's policy on human rights:

Dissent: Feeling the Backlash

Much about Andropov remains uncertain. But on one topic the new Soviet leader is clear-cut: While he is in charge, there will be no relaxation of "internal discipline."

There has been in 1983 a general tightening accompanied by demands for greater ideological conformity. Often, the rationale used has been the need to counter Reagan's "crusade" against Communism.

Today, every unofficial group set up nationwide to monitor Soviet compliance with the 1975 Helsinki Accord on human rights is in disarray. Priests, students critical of Soviet Communism, even individuals favoring better relations with the U.S., all are feeling the backlash.

For the first time in three decades, laudatory remarks about the KGB — the secret police which Andropov once headed — recently have appeared in *Pravda*, the Communist Party newspaper. "We don't know you," it said, "but we have boundless faith in you. You are needed as the air and the sun."

Meanwhile, Jewish emigration, which peaked at 51,320 in 1979, will total only 1,800 this year — the lowest figure since 1970. At least 9,000 Jews have had their request to leave the Soviet Union turned down, compared with one third that number in 1979.

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SMOLOSKYP

A QUARTERLY DEALING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS AFFAIRS IN UKRAINE AND EASTERN EUROPE

A publication of the Helsinki Guarantees for Ukraine Committee and the Ukrainian Information Service, SMOLOSKYP

SMOLOSKYP

SUMMER-FALL 1983

Letters to the Editor

Regarding your article in the Spring 1983 issue, "Andropov and the Jewish Issue," I would have to disagree that there is a "carrot and stick" policy. None of the hundreds of Soviet Jews who are in contact with us have seen any carrots. The purely anti-Semitic articles in the Soviet press have increased tremendously and the Jewish cultural groups have been stopped completely. The Torah (the first five books of Holy Scripture) have been declared "anti-Soviet."

The so-called "Anti-Zionist Citizens' Committee" is made up completely of quislings. None speak for the masses of Jews! The main spokesman for the group is Col. General D. Dragunsky, who trains P.L.O. terrorists in the Soviet Union.

If Yiddish language publications increase it is only because the Soviet government is trying even harder to suppress the Hebrew language — which is the true language of the Jewish minority. Those Jews who are trying to revive Jewish culture want to learn and read Hebrew — not Yiddish. Yiddish language publications are used by the government

for purely propaganda purposes. Andropov has increased the pressure on Hebrew teachers. Yosef Begun, who has already served two terms in exile, is now in Vladimir Prison. The reason? Teaching Hebrew! The arrests and threats against the teachers and students have made this activity increasingly dangerous. Meanwhile, fewer and fewer Jewish young people are admitted to institutions of higher education.

In conclusion, the Andropov regime could not possibly "bring them over" to its side and disarm Western Jewry with these methods. Only when Jewish emigration is freely allowed and when Hebrew language and Jewish culture and religion are freely allowed will the regime "deflect somewhat anti-Soviet statements by Jews in the West." It does not seem to us that the Andropov regime is trying in any way to appease or please either the masses of Soviet Jews or the Jews of the West.

Babette Wampold, President
Alabama Council to Save
Soviet Jews
Montgomery, Alabama

"We Raise Our Voices Along With These Valorous Women"

Mocking justice in a Soviet prison

MICHAEL and DENALI POLIAKOFF

Of all the people we met on our trip to the Soviet Union this summer, Inna Elbert is the one who haunts us most deeply. When we met her, her husband was in a Ukrainian prison awaiting trial on a transparently false charge of drug possession. Her courage and composure in the face of blood-chilling oppression have not failed. This is her account of the case.

The Soviet government has been angry at Lev Elbert for a number of reasons. For almost a decade he and his family have sought to leave the Soviet Union since, as Jews, they have had neither religious freedom nor even the normal few rights of Soviet citizens.

Then, last year, when the Soviet authorities sought to draft him for a second term in the army, Lev agreed to serve again but demanded a guarantee that this military service would not be a pretext for further denial of permission to emigrate. It is Soviet policy that all soldiers are officially party to "state secrets," and the government will not process their emigration applications for nine years after completion of service.

Lev had been caught in this trap once before and sought to avoid another decade of mandatory waiting. The Soviet government bitterly resented his challenge to their use of the draft as an obstacle to emigration, and on June 20 they sent Lev Elbert to the Kiev prison, officially charged with draft evasion, which carries a one-year sentence.

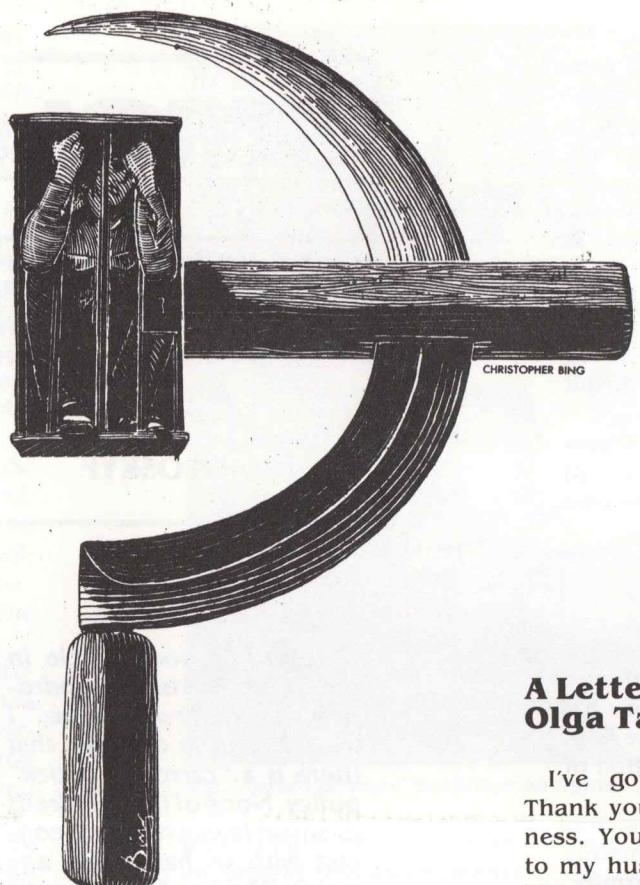
The Kiev prison officials took his belongings to the prison property room and searched them without event. On July 4 they sent him on to a camp some 400 miles from Kiev. All of Inna's cables went unanswered. Only when she telephoned on July 18 did she learn from the prosecutor's office that her husband was in a special punishment cell for the possession of drugs.

The officials refused to give her further information or to meet with her. All that she could ascertain was that they claimed to have found hashish sewn into his jacket, a crime carrying a three-year sentence.

Inna, her son and her father-in-law travelled to the prison and demanded a meeting with officials. Inna's threat to make the case public finally secured her a 10-minute meeting with the prosecutor. In answer to her testimony that the charge was false came the response of the judge: Instead of three years for possession, Lev could receive 10 years for dealing in hashish.

Finally, Inna was allowed to see Lev. His complexion was ashen, he had lost a lot of weight and his hands were raw and bleeding from banging against the cell door. Inna learned that he was being harassed in the cell by dangerous convicts imprisoned for sexual crimes. The prison officials refused to transfer him: a five-day hunger strike was ineffective, and only after he slashed his veins did prison officials grant him a different cell.

Inna told us that her official complaints concerning Lev's treatment in prison were disregarded, and for nearly a month she again lacked information about her husband. After a 10-day hunger strike, she earned assurance that officials would investigate the entire case. A chief prosecutor, newly assigned to the case, admitted to her that the prison officials might have "mistakenly" confused Lev's jacket with another.



A Letter from Olga Tarnopolsky:

I've got many letters of yours. Thank you very much for your kindness. You ask me to remember you to my husband. I'll do it when I see him, but I don't know when it will be. I haven't seen him for seven months already. What has happened to him is a real tragedy. I can't imagine how he will overcome all these conditions. His health is very poor. My daughter misses Yuri very much. I try to be a mother and a father for her. I can't give her everything my husband can. Now I must help my husband to survive, to dress him, which is not very easy. He needs vitamins and many other things which I try to get. On the 14th of October he had his 47th birthday. Irene goes to school. She is 12 already. You mentioned telegrams in your letter. I haven't got any of them. Simply nothing. Give my love to your family.

Truly yours,

Olga

(Received 11/3/83)

Send letters of support to Olga and Irina at:
USSR/Ukrainian SSR/Kharkov per.
Krasnoznamenny No. 2, Apt. 17 Tarnopolsky, Olga and Irina.

On November 10, Lev Elbert was relieved of "drug" charges due to insufficient evidence. See story on page 1.

Anti-Semitism Intensifies in the USSR

Ominous turn in Moscow

By GEOFFREY WIGODER

Reports by Western analysts say that the Andropov regime's attitude to Soviet Jews has taken an increasingly ominous shape.

It has involved a recrudescence of the vindictive international campaign against Zionism which had shown signs of flagging during the last months of the Brezhnev regime, an almost complete clamp-down on emigration, stricter repression of Jewish culture and the publication of crude anti-Zionist/anti-Semitic books and articles.

The signal for the new spurt of activity came at the beginning of April with a statement by a group of Soviet Jews proposing the establishment of the "Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Public."

Extreme anti-Zionist propaganda became a routine department of Soviet journalism, with leading newspapers introducing special columns headed "Beware: Zionism." Quotations from Soviet press articles in the London publication *Insight: Soviet Jews* include "The meaning of Zionism is to turn every Jew, no matter where he lives, into an agent of the Jewish oligarchy, into a traitor to the country in which he was born"; or "What do the Zionists teach in Israeli schools? To hate other peoples and to raise the Jewish people up as the highest people. How is this different from the philosophy of the German fascists?

Sinister analogies between Zionism in Israel and Hitlerite fascism are observed when comparing the ideologies of Zionism with *Mein Kampf*."

According to the *Washington Post*, the impact of the current anti-Zionist drive on Soviet Jewry is to place the Jews under the cloud of being tainted with dual loyalties. Under such circumstances, it is more difficult for them to assert their Jewishness or demand the right to emigrate to Israel.

It goes on to describe a recently published book, *The Class Essence of Zionism*, which attempts to eliminate the distinctions between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

Student enrollment halved

The total of Jewish university students in the Soviet Union stood at 112,000 in 1969, but by 1979 the figure had dropped to about 67,000.

The number of Jewish youths in institutions of higher learning in Moscow fell in 10 years from 19,000 to 9,900 (1971 to 1981).

Experts agreed that emigration in that period and the aging of the Soviet Jewish population did not explain the precipitous declines.

The Jewish Week & The American Examiner, Inc.
November 4, 1983

Beyond Moscow

While the Moscow-based anti-Zionist Committee of Soviet Society continues its own propaganda to label all Jews wishing to emigrate or study Hebrew and Jewish history as potential traitors, the Government's threat to set up further committees in each Soviet Republic was fulfilled in the Latvian SSR, the UCSJ learned earlier this month.

Two anti-Zionist committees have been established—in Riga and in the neighboring town of Daugavpils—both of which have a considerable Jewish population and include a refusenik community, some of whom have been involved in the study of Hebrew and Jewish culture.

INA, the wife of Professor Meiman, was refused milk in the local store where she has been a customer for eight years. The reason: "they don't sell milk to the Jews".

Continued from page 5

The outward flow of Germans and Armenians also has slowed to a trickle. Now, closed party meetings are told that the emigration policies of the 1970s were "a mistake."

Cultural life, too, is feeling the pinch. In March, a directive from the Communist Party's Central Committee demanded more Communist propaganda in the theater. Other moves have sought to inhibit authors, limit travel to the West by artists and restore "socialist realism" to a central place in artistic activities.

A year ago, the belief was widely held by Kremlin watchers that Yuri Andropov's accession to power would mark a change of Soviet mood from the aimless, drifting final days of Leonid Brezhnev. And, in fact, the mood in Moscow today is noticeably sharper and more assertive.

What have not changed and show few signs of changing, however, are the rigidity, waste and arbitrariness of a system that puts an entire nation into a straitjacket. What Andropov has proved in one year is that, despite his promises, he is dedicated to maintaining the status quo.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT.
Nov. 14, 1983
With permission

Jerusalem Post, 10/2-8/83

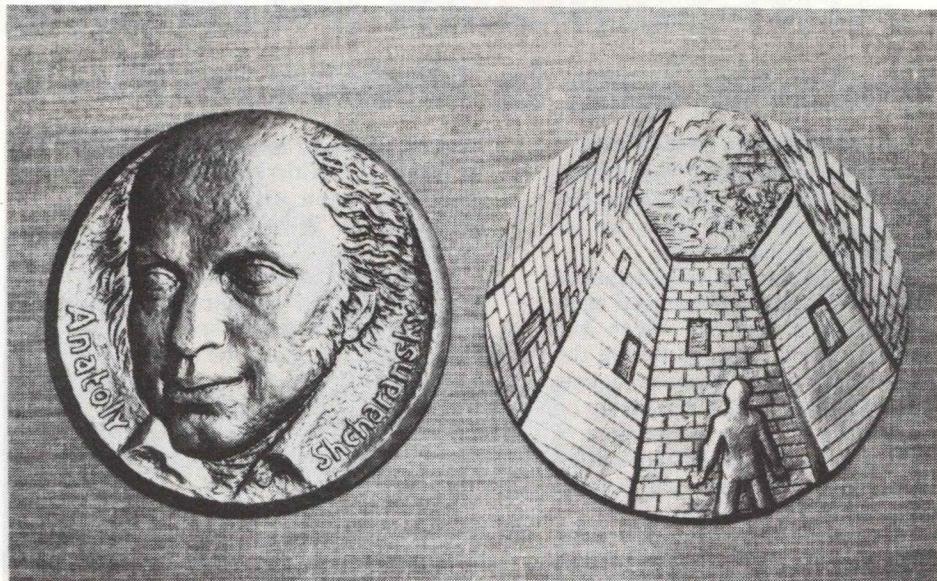
IN PLEA FOR SHCHARANSKY

After receiving a disturbing October letter from her Anatoly, Avital Shcharansky is requesting that "all efforts be exerted as rapidly as possible for the immediate hospitalization of Anatoly Shcharansky."

Avital, who speaks for herself and her mother-in-law, Ida Milgrom, writes: Anatoly's 100-day hunger strike from September 27, 1982-January 14, 1983 has taken its toll in a weakened heart muscle and frequent chest pains. While Soviet authorities refuse to hospitalize Anatoly on the basis that his condition has "not changed", Anatoly's health continues to deteriorate, with only temporary help from injections of vitamin B6 and glucose. **Send telegrams urging that Shcharansky be hospitalized immediately!**

Soviet Minister of Health
Sergei Burenkov
Rehmanovsky Pereulok #4
Moscow, USSR

Medal Created by former Leningrad Mint Artist



A monumental 4-1/2" bronze medal has been commissioned to honor Anatoly Shcharansky, and to serve as a permanent reminder to all free people of the rights which are all too often taken for granted.

The Shcharansky medal's creator, Alex Shagin, was on the artistic staff

of the Leningrad Mint, designing official medals. In 1977 Shagin applied for an exit visa and lost his high position. Eventually, Shagin gained freedom, and has sculptured this medal in tribute to his fellow refusenik.



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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.

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