



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

Vol. X No. 14

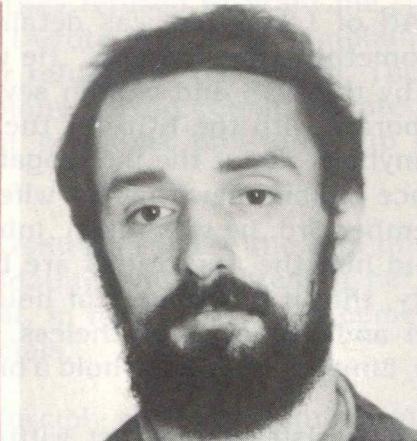
November 19, 1984

Hebrew Teachers Arrested; Crackdown Continues

In recent days, the Soviet government has intensified its state-sponsored anti-Semitism and stepped up its attacks against Jewish cultural activists seeking to be repatriated to Israel. Having almost terminated Jewish emigration, the Soviets are now accelerating their drive against Jewish study groups and their teachers — the lifeline of Jewish survival in the USSR.

With emigration less than 800 to date this year, the Soviets are seeking to further intimidate the community through systematic harassments and arrests of Jews.

Alexander Kholmiansky, a 34-year old computer engineer from Moscow, was arrested on July 25 on charges of "aggravated hooliganism" and "mailbox tampering" while on holiday in Viru, Estonia. KGB agents subsequently entered his apartment, which he shares with his parents, and allegedly "found" a loaded gun and bullets which sources say were planted at the time of the search. The KGB also claimed to find undeveloped film of two books, one with a Jewish subject. Kholmiansky, a six-year refusenik, has been on a protest hunger strike since September 13, and is being force-fed in a Tallinn prison.



P.O.C. Alexander Kholmiansky



P.O.C. Yuli Edelstein

Another prominent Moscow Hebrew teacher, Yuli Edelstein, was arrested on September 4 on trumped-up charges of drug possession. The KGB now alleges that it found drugs in a matchbox during a search of his home, and also confiscated his Hebrew books and items left by foreign visitors. Soviet authorities have accused "foreigners of coming and corrupting Jewish youth with medieval and mystical drug rituals." Edelstein is being held in a Moscow prison and it is feared that he might be tried together with Kholmiansky in a nationwide show trial.

Hebrew teacher and watch repairer Yacov Levin, of Odessa, was arrested on August 12, and charged with defaming the Soviet state, five days before he was to marry refusenik Yehudit Nepomniashchy. On August 23, Levin's mother and Nepomniashchy went to the prison to deliver a package of food and clothing for Levin. Nepomniashchy asked that the guard also give Levin a package containing some religious items. Prison authorities refused to accept the package, saying that "This isn't a synagogue," and that Nepomniashchy is not Levin's relative, and so

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Soviets Link Drugs to Jewish Ritual

In an unprecedented move, 129 Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist and Reform rabbis have written jointly to USSR leader Konstantin Chernenko declaring that the new KGB arrests of Jews linking drugs to Jewish ritual is "almost too obscene to be believed", and demanding that he "instruct the KGB to cease using this false and evil accusation". The letter was initiated by Rabbi Avraham Weiss, chairman of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry.

In recent weeks, the SSSJ said, the secret police have ripped a mezuzah from its doorpost, ordered a refusenik to pry open his *tefilin* (phylacteries), beaten an elderly mother, broken down an apartment door and seized Jewish bibles, books and other ritual items in a "search" for "drugs" allegedly used by unofficial Jewish teachers and their circles on the Sabbath and in religious ceremonies.

The rabbis told Chernenko: "The

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Thatcher Support for Soviet Jews

By Martin Gilbert

In an unprecedented gesture, five Leningrad Jews have appealed direct to the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, for support in their struggle to leave the Soviet Union for Israel.

"One of the five signatories, Evgenia Utevskaya, is the mother of two young children. Since 1982 she has repeatedly been refused permission to join her parents in the Israeli

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NEWSBRIEFS

YAKOV GORODETSKY was arrested in Leningrad after refusing to inform the KGB of his employment status. A leading activist of the repatriation movement, Gorodetsky was threatened by the KGB to keep silent or else a pistol could be found in his apartment. Following an administrative proceeding, he was sentenced to two months of "correctional labor." Gorodetsky remains at home because his sentence will be served in Leningrad. HIS ADDRESS IS Podresova 17, Apt. 8, Leningrad 197136, RSFSR, USSR.

On November 1st **MISHA ELMAN** of Leningrad was detained by the KGB based on the premise that he tried to "pass something to someone." He was taken to the #50 Police Office, detained and interrogated by the KGB and beaten severely. He was forced to sign a declaration that he would collaborate with the KGB for the interest of the Soviet authorities and that he would not tell anybody about the interrogation. That night, his wife, Dina, gave birth to a boy, Galit Zvi. Once Elman knew that his wife and baby were all right, he revealed the information. On November 3rd, he was taken, interrogated for four hours, badly beaten and threatened. They told him the authorities are bored with Jews, that they will stop any religious Jewish activity, that it is a matter of hours of freedom left for Gorodetsky and they will crush Rochlin and others. Nevertheless, Elman refused to collaborate. Despite KGB attempts to break in, Elman managed to hold a brit milah for his son.

ILANA KHOLMIANSKY, Alexander's sister-in-law met with an official in the Procurator's office named Mr. Salnikov who informed her that Alexander will not be released before his trial, as they requested. He is still on a hunger strike in the Tallinn prison and has been forced-fed once every three days. It was mentioned that he is facing charges of possession of a weapon, anti-Soviet agitation, and having contact with foreigners and providing them with information on refuseniks. The investigation is underway in Moscow and no trial date has been set. TELEGRAMS ON BEHALF OF Kholmiansky and Yuli Edelstein should be sent to the two officials assigned to the case (Rekunkov and Niegova) in the Procurator's office.

Yuli Edelstein's wife, TATIANA, is still on a hunger strike which she began on October 19th.

YAKOV LEVIN's trial has been postponed on his lawyers request. THE PRISON ADDRESS FOR **Levin, Mark Nepomniashchy, and Yan Mesh** is: Name of Prisoner, I.C. 31192, Odessa 59, Ukrainian SSR, USSR.

Searches were conducted in Tiraspol at the home of **POLINA GREEN** and in Kishinev at the apartment of **ARON MOONBLIT**. Both searches were made in regard to the case of **YAKOV LEVIN** on search warrants dated September 24, 1984. However, Levin's case had already been closed by September 24, and it is against Soviet law to conduct a search after a closing of an investigation. **MOISE LEIBERMAN**'s apartment in Benderi was searched in connection with Levin's case.

As of October 29, the family of Soviet dissident **ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY** is not sure where he is, his wife, Avital, said. Mr. Shcharansky completed his prison term last week, she said, and was to be transferred to a labor camp to finish a sentence on charges of collaborating with American intelligence. His mother went to the prison to see her son last week and was told that he had been transferred but Soviet officials refused to tell her the name of his labor camp, Mrs. Shcharansky said.

NEWSBRIEFS

Letter from Prisoner-of-Conscience Zachar Zunshain to his wife Tatiana 10/1/84

"I am now in the Colony. They brought me here on the 27th of September. On my arrival I was beaten. They beat me and kicked me repeatedly with their boots all over my body: in my kidneys and on my chest and face. They tried to force me to submit an application to join one of the groups (sponsored by the camp commander) in the Colony. I have been kicked in the chest so much that every deep breath brought me chest pains, pains so severe that I could not stand on my feet. They refused to grant me sick leave and forced me to work even on Sundays. I wrote a letter of complaint to the Irkutsk Oblast but the camp administrator refused to pass it on. They took away all of my belongings here in the Colony. Living conditions are terrible. It is impossible to shower properly and at breakfast only one cup is available for every two prisoners..."

TATIANA ZUNSHAIN was in Leningrad where the arm of the KGB is making every attempt to break **ZACHAR** by intimidating and frightening her. She has been told that he will never leave the camp and that, in fact, he will not come out alive unless he collaborates and cooperates with camp officials.

Marina Mesh of Odessa was forcibly removed from her plane seat and dragged to an interrogation room at the airport. She was on her way to Moscow to seek help for her imprisoned husband, **YAKOV MESH**. She was told that she is not to leave Odessa; that she was to remain quiet and cause no problems, for if she did she could end up in the same position as her husband. During the interrogation, the only copy of the statement signed by the 9 witnesses to her husband's beating and arrest was confiscated.

INNA, the wife of imprisoned **YOSIF BEGUN**, recently received a reply from the Health Administration of the Ministry of the Interior to her numerous enquiries about her husband. The letter states that Begun has been discharged from the prison hospital and that he is back in the camp compound. However, Inna has not heard directly from Yosif since the letter from him she received on June 22.

Inna also received a letter from the camp governor in which he informed her that according to the rules it was forbidden to keep religious articles in the prison. (Earlier she told friends that her husband was on a hunger strike because the camp authorities confiscated his prayer book).

ALEKSANDR YAKIR was transferred to Krasnaya Presnaya prison pending his appeal. It is known as a "waiting point jail with conditions reportedly worse than Butyrka."

On Yom Kippur, the KGB came to **MARK MIKHLIN**'s house in Kiev and said that he should not be wearing kippot because it is a religious observance.

LEV ELBERT was recently told by a representative of religious matters in the city municipality that Shabbat is a religious celebration and one must receive permission from the authorities to celebrate it.

VLADIMIR LIFSHITZ was told by the KGB in Leningrad that the police are getting disgusted that they have to take care of and protect Jews from the rest of the Soviet citizens.

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Action ALERT

From Local Councils

Freedom Run For Soviet Jewry

The recent "Run for Freedom For Soviet Jewry" solemnly began as Linda P. Lanes, Chairperson of the **Soviet Jewry Committee of the Jewish Federation of the North Shore**, lit the "Freedom Torch" and handed it to Rita Green, Run Coordinator, to light the way to freedom for Jews denied their human rights in the Soviet Union. The demonstrators participated in a 4-mile run to protest the Soviet government's treatment of its Jewish population. Hebrew hymns were played, as the sound truck wound its way through the streets of Marblehead and Salem. Runners symbolically assumed the identity of a "Refusenik" by wearing a biography and photo pinned on their clothing.



(L-R) Salem, Massachusetts Mayor Anthony Salvo; Linda P. Lanes, Chairperson Soviet/Ethiopian Jewry Committee, Jewish Federation of the North Shore of Massachusetts; and U.S. Representative Nicholas Mavroules (D-MA 6th District).

Photo Credit: David Schneider

BACSJ Simchat Torah Contest Winners

WINNER: Best Essay
"Freedom"

It's hard to understand the problems of the Jews in Russia. Here I am writing this essay in my religious school class without American troops circling the building. We're so fortunate to be able to attend shabbat and holiday services, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, go to Hebrew and religious school while our Jews in Russia are being deprived from all of this. That's why we do this kind of thing. The reason I underlined do is because idle talk and feeling sorry accomplishes nothing. If you act, then progress is made. Letters, twin Bar/Bat Mitzvahs and traveling to Russia to talk to Refuseniks is the effective way of achieving change. Not saying it's terrible — but acting, and acting now.

Jason Kamras, age 10
Mosaic Law Congregation

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Simchat Torah

On Simchat Torah, the only holiday Jews are permitted to observe in the Soviet Union, thousands of Jews gathered at the synagogue in *Leningrad*. Several Hebrew teachers stood in the crowd holding signs indicating that those interested in Hebrew lessons should meet at a specified time. Despite fears caused by the recent arrests and crackdowns, the Hebrew teachers were inundated with responses.

In a massive show of solidarity with Jews in the USSR, 4000 people celebrated Simchat Torah in front of the Soviet Consulate in *San Francisco*. The 15th annual rally and street fair was held to protest the worsening oppression of Soviet Jews.

"The Soviet authorities have begun a new anti-Semitic campaign," said Lillian Foreman, co-president of the **Bay Area Council for Soviet Jews**, a co-sponsor of the rally. "The KGB now says that Jews use religious objects, such as mezzuzot, to sniff illegal drugs. We must oppose this outrageous lie."

In *Cincinnati*, children at the Isaac M. Wise Temple shared their Simchat Torah celebration with six Soviet Jews who will not be allowed to pursue a religious education or celebrate their cultural heritage. Empty chairs marked the places held for Slava, Mark, Yuri, Orit, Anna and Lubov. They are the children of Soviet "Refuseniks," Jews who have been refused permission to leave the Soviet Union in order to practice their religion without harassment.

While Simchat Torah represents "the circle of reading and study that never ends," Jews in the Soviet Union are often forced outside the circle, said Sandy Spinner, director of the **Cincinnati Council for Soviet Jews**. "The Soviet constitution guarantees religious freedom," she said. "But in practice, there are no schools for the teaching of Jewish culture or Jewish religion or the Hebrew language."



Simchat Torah Soviet Jewry Rally and Fair at Soviet Consulate in San Francisco.
Photo Credit: Jon Haber

Refuseniks Plea:

The following letter was signed by 42 Moscow hunger strikers. Its significance is dramatic. It is the first time Holocaust language has been used by Refuseniks to this extent in a public letter to Soviet authorities. Over 160 Soviet Jewish activists in ten cities in the Soviet Union have joined the solidarity fast.

To: Central Committee C.P. - U.S.S.R.
Prosecutor's Office of U.S.S.R.
Minister of Internal Affairs of the U.S.S.R.

The Statement:

During the past 2 months, the competent Soviet authorities have developed a campaign of moral and physical annihilation of Jewish Refuseniks who are trying to obtain their visas to be repatriated to Israel. Alexander Kholmiansky, Yuli Edelstein, Yakov Levin, Yan Mesh and Mark Nepomniashchy have been arrested and are now being kept in the investigating prison. We are acting as witnesses to explain and prove that none of them perpetrated these crimes for which they are being incriminated and never had any other aim other than the aim of going to Israel.

We many times turned to the Central Committee of the USSR and the prosecutor's office with requests and demands to stop the massacre which has been going on from the point of view of the Refuseniks. But the chain of assault and arrests continues. We know that since the 13th of Sept. in a prison in Tallinn, Alexander Kholmiansky has been on hunger strike. He demands the falsification of evidence and the tyranny towards him stopped.

Now, today, on the 20th of October, at the end of Shabbat, we join his hunger strike and we demand:

1. That the pistol, bullets, and photocopies of prohibited books which were planted during the search be removed as evidence from the case;
2. That the illegal detention of Alexander Kholmiansky be stopped; that the criminal case against Yuli Edelstein be stopped and that he be released;
3. That Yan Mesh be released and that criminal proceedings be instituted against people who are guilty of planning his extermination;
4. The immediate interference of the prosecutor's office of the USSR in the investigation of the criminal cases against Yakov Levin and Mark Nepomniashchy.

UCSJ Responds:

Support for hunger strike broadens: telephone calls to Soviet officials continued

In continuation of their dramatic demonstration of solidarity with Jewish activists in the Soviet Union, members of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews across the country are in a continuing rotational hunger strike.

In *Chicago*, the first week of hunger-strikers included Rabbi Mark Shapiro of Temple B'nai Joshua Beth Elohim who began the sympathetic protest on Sunday, October 21. Also protesting were Rabbi Joseph Edelheit, President of the Chicago Association of Reform Rabbis, and Rabbi Alan Bregman, Director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

In *Florida*, over 25 Synagogues are participating in the South Dade area. Rabbi Ralph Kingsley of Temple Sinai of North Dade, and Chairman of the Soviet Jewry Committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, issued the following statement:

"We are desperately trying to reach out to Hebrew teachers and Jewish activists in the Soviet Union. We want to tell the hunger-strikers that they are not alone. We share in their deeply felt pain and anguish. This fast will let the Soviets know that Jews the world over are inextricably bound together in a time of crisis."

The Long Island Committee of the UCSJ has enlisted the support and cooperation of area Hebrew teachers who are fasting on behalf of their imprisoned counterparts in the Soviet Union.

Concerned citizens have also been directed to call the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C. at (202) 737-7915, (202) 628-7551; the Soviet UN delegation in New York City at (212) 861-9400, and the Soviet Consulate in *San Francisco* at (415) 922-6442. The UCSJ has urged callers to appeal to the Soviets to release Kholmiansky and asks callers not to use abusive or threatening language.

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, the oldest and largest non-student organization in the United States representing the rights and interests of Soviet Jews, is coordinating support for the hunger strikers within their 35 member councils across the country and their international affiliates.

Pam Cohen, UCSJ Vice-President, issued the following statement: "It is hideous that the Soviets would be reduced to these anti-Semitic arrests. It is reminiscent of a case in Kiev in August and September of 1911, when Mendel Beilis was charged with the ritual slaying of a 12-year old boy so that his blood could be used in the preparation of matzah. Russian intellectuals and scientists of the time created a storm of protest over the case and the jury composed of uneducated Russian peasants found Beilis not guilty." Cohen continued, "The Soviets must be made accountable to their own laws. This libeling must stop."

"There is no time to lose!"

Stating that "our pain and fear for the fate of our imprisoned friends haunts us relentlessly", 65 Jewish activists from 10 cities in the USSR have appealed to "heads of states which signed the Helsinki Agreement" to help "stop the tragedy" of persecution of those who seek to "find their way to their national homeland after thousands of years of exile," the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry has learned.

The signers included former Prisoners of Conscience Ida Nudel and Evgeny Lein; Dan Shapiro and Inna Bruchina, whose homes were raided by the KGB looking for "drugs"; and Mark Nepomniashchy, whose daughter's fiance was seized by the secret police a week before their wedding. Shortly after signing this letter, Nepomniashchy himself was arrested.

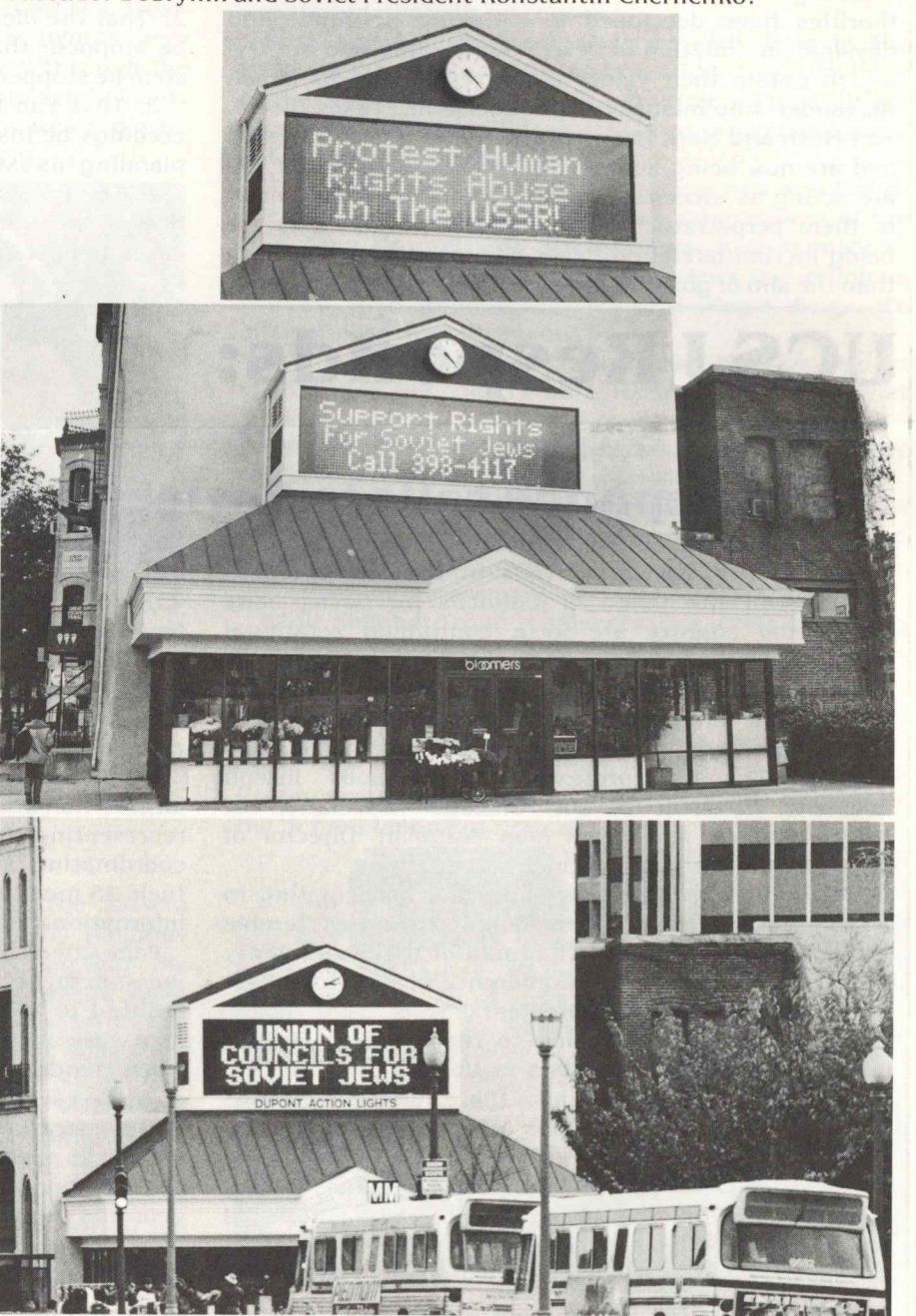
According to the SSSJ, the 65 continued: "We appeal to you also because our concern for our friends and relatives has become an integral part of our existence. We appeal to you because the Holocaust — not stopped by the civilized world in time — lives actively in our memory.

"We do not interfere with the Soviet state and social system. We feel that we are Jews, and want to repatriate to Israel, to live in our national home. This is our only and vital goal. The whole world recognizes one's right to live where he wants, but meanwhile the number of our friends imprisoned or on the verge of it grows rapidly.

"Moshe Abramov of Samarkand was sentenced to three years for alleged 'hooliganism'. Zachar Zunshain of Riga was given three years for alleged 'anti-Soviet slander'. Alexander Yakir of Moscow was sentenced to two years for refusing to serve in the army. Nadezhda Fradkova of Leningrad was forcibly put in a psychiatric hospital. Alexander Kholmiansky of Moscow awaits trial. Yakov Levin of Odessa was arrested on charges of 'defaming the Soviet state'. Vladimir Brodsky of Moscow was sentenced to 15 days, and Yakov Gorodetsky of Leningrad to two months' 'corrective labor'. Yuli Edelstein of Moscow was arrested for 'drug possession'. All of them had applied to emigrate to Israel.

Washington Talk

Commuters driving down Connecticut Avenue last week were greeted by a message on an electronic billboard: PROTEST HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE IN THE USSR! SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS FOR SOVIET JEWS — CALL 393-4117. The billboard message was displayed in response to the recent incarceration of Alexander Kholmiansky (See Article, p. 1). The message on the UCSJ answering machine urged callers to call the Soviet Embassy and protest Kholmiansky's imprisonment. UCSJ Vice-President Hinda Cantor called the billboard "a unique call to action to give an added voice to those who suffer silently in the Soviet Union." Elsewhere in Washington, youth groups and Senior citizens groups joined in the campaign initiated by the Washington Committee for Soviet Jewry to telephone the Soviet Embassy and demand the release of Kholmiansky and Yuli Edelstein, a fellow Hebrew teacher. Also, the Washington Committee has met with the greater Washington Rabbinate, calling for phone calls and protest to Ambassador Dobrynin and Soviet President Konstantin Chernenko.



Hebrew Teachers (Continued from page 1)

is not permitted to send him packages in prison.

Twenty-two year old Nepomniashchy has petitioned the Soviet authorities on Levin's behalf, claiming that "the KGB has carried out its threat to imprison Levin because of his refusal to testify against well-known refusenik Yakov Mesh last July.

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews has learned that on October 17, Yakov Mesh, of Odessa, was picked up and taken by ten policemen outside of the movie theater where he works. Realizing that it was an obvious and staged provocation, he shouted to the assembled witnesses, "I am going willingly; I am not resisting the police." After being kept by the police for three days, Mesh was charged with Article 179 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code (182 USSR Code) for "refusing to give testimony." Also, he is charged with Article 188.1 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code (191/1 USSR), "official resistance to a policeman or people's guard." He is in jail in Odessa.

Following the arrests of Levin and Mesh, Yehudit Nepomniashchy's 53-year old father, Mark, was arrested and charged with defaming the Soviet state while visiting friends in Moscow. Mark Nepomniashchy, an electrical engineer from Odessa, is unwell and deaf. Yehudit was told that it may be necessary for her father to undergo a psychiatric examination to determine whether he can be put on trial. In addition, he may have to be hospitalized for observation since he had been treated for schizophrenia in 1959.

Morey Schapira, national president of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, advises that messages of protest be sent to:

General Procurator of the USSR
Alexander Rekunkov
Pushkinskaya 15A
Moscow, RSFSR, USSR
Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin
Embassy of the USSR
1 Andrei Sakharov Plaza, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
Soviet Chairman
Konstantin Chernenko
Chairman of the Presidium
of the Supreme Soviet
The Kremlin
Moscow, RSFSR, USSR

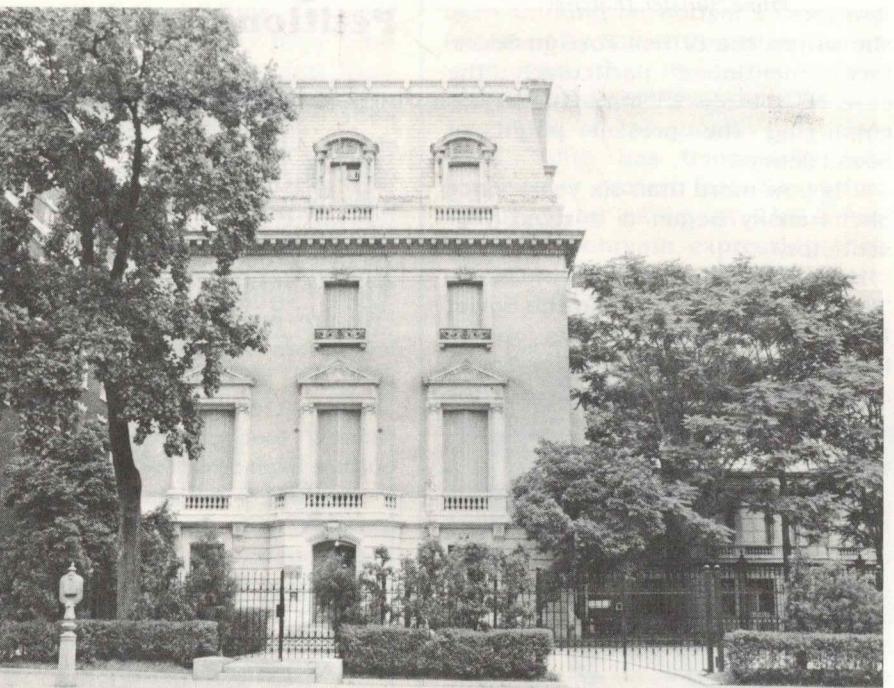
ALERT On Capitol Hill



US Congress Changes Address of Soviet Embassy

The Soviet Embassy in Washington, DC is now officially located at 1 Andrei Sakharov Plaza. The address change, from 1125 16th Street, was initiated earlier this year at a meeting of the International Parliamentary Group for Human Rights in the Soviet Union (IPG). While the Senate approved the address change as a provision in the District of Columbia Appropriations Bill late in the summer, House members of a Conference Committee agreed to the provision on September 26. Senator Charles Grassley (R-IO), who initiated the measure in the Senate said, "With every piece of mail now delivered to 1 Andrei Sakharov Plaza, we hope to remind the Soviets that the courage and stature of their freedom-seeking peoples have made their impact felt throughout the world."

**Address further correspondence to the
Embassy of the USSR
1 Andrei Sakharov Plaza
Washington, DC 20036**



1 Andrei Sakharov Plaza

UCSJ To Welcome 99th Congress; Save the Date

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews will hold its 6th Biennial Briefing for members of Congress and their staffs on January 23, 9:30-11:30 AM in Room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Thatcher

(Continued from page 1)

town of Beersheba. Another signatory, Yakov Gorodetsky, who for more than two years has been at the center of a Jewish cultural revival in Leningrad, had his first application for an exit visa refused last month. A third signatory, Grigory Vasserman, a deeply religious young Jew, has been refused an exit visa for five years.

In their letter, the five Leningrad Jews appeal to Mrs. Thatcher as 'the leader of a country which in the most dangerous period of history remained faithful to the ideals of democracy and humanitarianism.' Their overriding wish is to be what they describe as 'repatriated' to Israel, the country which, though they have never seen it, they regard as their national home.

'Every representative of a nation,' write the Leningrad five, 'has the right to emigrate from a country where it comprises a minority, to its own country.'

In a letter acknowledging this courageous appeal, Mrs. Thatcher wishes the five signatories to know of her 'very real concern, and that of my colleagues, at the difficulties facing the Jewish community in the Soviet Union, particularly over the question of emigration.'

Mrs. Thatcher's letter continues: 'We have frequently made known to the Soviet authorities our regret at their refusal to grant exit visas to many Soviet citizens wanting to emigrate in order to be re-united with their families. We have also taken

every opportunity to remind the Soviet Union about its obligation under the Helsinki Final Act and Madrid Concluding Document.'

In her letter, Mrs. Thatcher goes on to recall that the most recent occasion on which the British Government reminded the Soviet Union about these obligations was when the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, visited Mr. Gromyko in Moscow in July. On that occasion,



Prime Minister Thatcher

she writes, the British Foreign Secretary 'mentioned particularly the case of Anatoly Shcharansky as exemplifying the present plight of Soviet Jewry.'

It is now more than six years since Shcharansky began a thirteen year sentence.

Mrs. Thatcher's letter continues. 'We shall go on reminding the Soviet Union of its human rights obligations.' She also wants the five Soviet Jews who have written to her to be

assured 'that we shall not let the issue raised in their letter be lost from view.'

The text of Mrs. Thatcher's reply, communicated to Leningrad earlier this week, has given enormous encouragement to those who wrote to her, as well as to many of their friends who have likewise been refused exit visas. The British Prime Minister's letter has also served as a substantial reassurance, vital for their morale in adversity, that the plight of the Jews in the Soviet Union is of continuing high-level concern, not only in the United States but on the European side of the Atlantic.

Martin Gilbert, a long-time associate of the Union of Councils, is the official biographer of Sir Winston Churchill. He has recently authored Jews of Hope, published in Great Britain, and due to be released in the USA in January.

Congressmen Petition Chernenko

111 Congressmen have sent a joint letter to Kremlin leader Konstantin Chernenko 'deplored the arrests of leading refuseniks and Hebrew teachers Alexander Kholmiansky, Yakov Levin, Yuli Edelstein and Yacov Gorodetsky,' according to the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry. 'We are fearful these actions,' the legislators declared, 'are the beginning of an alarming stepped-up Soviet determination to eradicate Hebrew teachers and thus Jewish culture from Soviet society.'

'We find it perposterous the false charges you have made against these four men.'

'We urge that they and their families be permitted to repatriate to Israel. Further, we ask you to allow the teaching of Hebrew, the Jewish religion and Jewish culture in a free and open environment. We urge your immediate attention to these matters of great and growing concern to the United States and the American people.'

The SSSJ said that the communication was initiated by Reps. Larry Smith (D-FL), Stephen Solarz (D-NY), Silvio Conte (R-MA), and Steve Bartlett (R-TX).

Drugs

(Continued from page 1)

Jewish people are all too familiar with ritual libels. In medieval times, Jews were accused of poisoning wells. In 1912, under the Czar, Jews were accused of murdering children for their blood for Passover matzah.

'This charge is almost two obscene to be believed. As rabbis, we teach the belief in the basic goodness of each person. We find it almost beyond our comprehension that the agents of the KGB must resort to such evil lies.'

'Jews do not — and have never — used drugs in religious ceremonies.'

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Kotlyar Case Reconsidered Following Hunger Strike

After years of frustration and disappointment, a Soviet Jewish emigre and her two children began a hunger strike in San Francisco on October 15 to publicize the plight of her ailing 77-year-old mother, whom Soviet authorities have repeatedly denied permission to emigrate. The elderly woman in Kiev began a hunger strike on that day as well.

Edith Kotlyar was permitted to leave the USSR with her husband and two children in 1979, but Kotlyar's mother and brother — with whom they shared an apartment — were refused. The Kotlyars now live in San Francisco. Kotlyar's son is 22, and her daughter is 10.

In the past five years Kotlyar has sent numerous 'invitations,' the required official document, to her mother and brother. They, in turn, have applied each time for exit visas; but each time they have been refused with excuses ranging from 'insufficient kinship' to 'no reason for re-unification' with family.

Kotlyar has now appealed without success to every major Soviet official for the release of her mother and brother. In recent years, Kiev has become an increasingly oppressive city for Jews, with anti-Semitic propaganda flooding the media. Out of



Edith Kotlyar (center) announcing her hunger strike at a press conference at San Francisco City Hall. Circled around her are (from right to left) San Francisco Supervisor Carol Ruth Silver, Edith's son, Vladimir, Edith's husband, Alexander, and her daughter, Yelena. Photo Credit: Michael Kesselman

desperation and fear that she may never see her mother alive again, Kotlyar decided that she had nothing left but to begin a hunger strike.

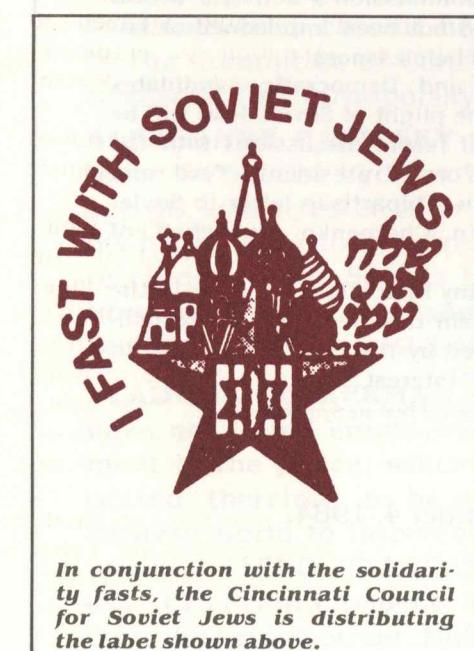
Two days after Edith Kotlyar began her hunger strike, San Francisco Mayor Diane Feinstein, who had been working on Kotlyar's case, was informed by Soviet Consulate General Myshkov that the Soviet government was reconsidering the case.

In light of this positive development, Edith has temporarily suspended her protest fast. Supporters are urged to WRITE OR CABLE Ambassador Dobrynin expressing their pleasure that the case has been re-

opened and hopes that the family will be reunited.

Senator Roberti Receives Soviet Jewry Award

In a related story, California President pro tem David Roberti, who has 'adopted' the case of Kotlyar's mother and brother, was awarded the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews Shcharansky Medal for his efforts on behalf of Soviet Jewry. Morey Schapira, UCSJ president, gave Roberti the award at the office of the Bay Area Council for Soviet Jews.



In conjunction with the solidarity fasts, the Cincinnati Council for Soviet Jews is distributing the label shown above.



(Left to Right) Morey Schapira, Edith Kotlyar, Senate Pres. pro tem David Roberti, Yelena Kotlyar. Photo Credit: Michael Kesselman

Jack Anderson

Soviet Jews: 'Emigration Is Over'

There has always been an ugly linkage between the Kremlin's anti-Western spasms and anti-Semitic proclivities. Whenever the old Bolsheviks intensify their efforts to undermine the foreign policy and security arrangements of the United States, the Jews who live under their rule pay a terrible price.

During the era of detente, the Jews were tolerated and allowed to emigrate. The high point came in 1979, when 51,320 Jews were permitted to leave their Soviet homeland. But the following year, when President Carter ordered a boycott of the Moscow Olympics in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, only 21,471 Jews emigrated.

The flood of emigres continued to ebb under President Reagan until it became a trickle. Now it is an agonizing drip. Only 730 Jews have been permitted to leave the Soviet Union this year. About 25 got permission to emigrate in the first three weeks of last month.

In fact, State Department sources told my associate Lucette Lagnado, Soviet authorities no longer make even a pretense of giving hope to the refuseniks, as would-be Jewish emigres are called. In recent weeks, the KGB has told those who apply for exit visas to forget it: emigration is over.

The situation appears to be worse than that, according to classified State Department intelligence reports. They suggest that Jews have resumed their historical role in Russia as the government's favorite punching bags.

An especially poignant case was that of Iosif Begun, a teacher of Hebrew. He was arrested and "his prayer book was taken away from him," a confidential cable to the State Department from the Moscow embassy states. Begun responded with the only weapon of protest available to him: a hunger strike.

"It lasted 60 days," the cable notes. "It was ended when he was force-fed by the authorities." That was last July.

The teacher's wife has been trying in vain to

visit him in detention. "His wife went to the prison three times," the cable states, "and was not permitted to see him. His family will not be permitted to see him until June 1985."

Other, similar examples lead Soviet analysts here to conclude that the quiet persecution has become official policy.

But it gets even worse. In recent months, the KGB has planted evidence of criminal behavior as a means of harassing Jews who persist in asking to leave the country. For example, another teacher of Hebrew, Yulik Edelshtein was arrested after a quantity of hashish had been planted on him. Another Jewish activist had a gun planted on him by the KGB, according to cable traffic.

So harsh has the official crackdown on Jews become in recent months that Kremlinologists have coined the word "neo-Stalinism" to describe it. The reference to the most notorious anti-Semite of modern Russian history is chilling, but my sources say it is a reasonably accurate assessment of the new policy — though it has not yet reached the bloodthirsty excesses of Stalin's era.

Sources at the Helsinki Commission, which still tries to monitor human rights abuses in the Soviet Union, say they have received reports of Christian dissidents who have died in suspicious circumstances while serving prison terms. There would undoubtedly be harder evidence of such persecution if the commission's activists within the Soviet Union had not been imprisoned or harassed to the point of helplessness.

Both Republican and Democratic candidates have pledged that the plight of Soviet Jews will be an important part of future discussions with the Soviet leadership. Former presidents Ford and Carter have joined in a bipartisan letter to Soviet President Konstantin Chernenko on behalf of Soviet Jewry.

But if the past is any indication, the Jews in the Soviet Union will again take second place to policy matters considered by the two superpowers to be of greater national interest.

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NEWSBRIEFS

EVGENYA and MIKHAIL VINAVER of Leningrad were denied permission to renounce their Soviet citizenship. Vinaver was called to the KGB and shown a letter that they claim his wife sent stating that if they did not stop harassing and arresting the Hebrew teachers the Hermitage would be blown up. Vinaver and his wife, of course, categorically deny it and they are asking that TELEGRAMS BE SENT TO the local prosecutors office in Leningrad and the All-Union Prosecutor's office.

YEVGENY LEIN was interrogated for three hours, badly beaten, and warned by the KGB that he could spend more time in prison. He wrote the following letter to the Prosecutor of Leningrad ul. Yakobovicha, #4 Leningrad, RSFSR, USSR:

On November 10th, 1984, three unknown plainclothesmen stopped me on the staircase to the entrance to the elevator of my home, and rudely demanded me to follow them. Passing the door of my apartment, I rang the bell to tell my family that I was detained. At the same moment, a man who was behind me attacked me and began to beat me on my face, on my head, and on my body. They continued to beat me as they dragged me to the car, a Volga, which was parked near passers by and continued to beat me in the car too. They were accosting me because of my official complaints. One of them wrenched my thumb of my right hand and said that "so you beasts should write your complaints with your left hand." Another one put something against my chin and threatened to cut my throat. When I asked the chief of this group to stop this abuse he answered, "you have already been in prison for one year. Now we shall imprison you for four years for resistance to authorities." They deliberately knocked me on my left ear because they knew I hear practically nothing with my right ear. I have a disease of the nerves in my ear. I was taken to the district police office, #58, and kept there for three hours. The plainclothesmen refused to give their names but I recognized two of them as members of the Jewish department of Leningrad KGB whom I have seen recently near the synagogue on Simchat Torah. I'm sure that you will be able to find their names. When I was released I went to the trauma station. The doctor found I had a trauma of my left ear, traumatic audiotitis. My left ear feels pain even from a slight movement of the ear. I demand that you see these people according to Paragraph 9, Criminal Code of RSFSR, "premeditated body injuries."

Noting that **YURI TARNOPOLSKY** has served over half of his three-year sentence and that he suffers from chronic heart and gall bladder ailments, 200 American chemists, organized by the Committee of Concerned Scientists, petitioned the Soviet government for the "early release of Yuri Tarnopolsky on humanitarian grounds."

ALEKSANDR PARITSKY returned to his family in Kharkov after serving a three-year sentence in Stantsi Vydrino labor camp for allegedly "defaming the Soviet state." Paritsky, age 46, was arrested after a long campaign of KGB harassment culminated in the search of his home. Prior to his arrest, Paritsky's academic title, Kandidat of Technical Sciences, was rescinded by the Soviets because of his alleged "anti-patriotic activity," marking the first time such action was taken against a scientist for his desire to emigrate to Israel. HIS ADDRESS IS Tankopiya 19-2-48, Kharkov 310091, Ukr. SSR, USSR.

VLADIMIR TZUKERMAN and OSIP LOKSHIN received permission to live in Kishinev. They have not found employment, despite being sent to various places by the Special Department in the police, which handles such cases. No place would accept them. They are expected, therefore, to be accused of parasitism. They have asked union organizers in the Western world to intervene on their behalf. We appeal to all lawyers and officials of trade unions to SEND TELEGRAMS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESSES: USSR, Moldavian SSR, Kishinev, 125 Lenin Prospekt, Ministry of the Interior, Sepanov; and USSR, Moldavian SSR, Kishinev, 166 Lenina Street, Mold. SSR KGB, Rudakov.

Simchat Torah

(Continued from page 4)

WINNER: Best Poem

"Farther Away"

Far away is a place,
Not just by miles, but by spirit.
Far away is a place
Closed off by a wall, stronger than brick.

Far away is a place,
Blocked by a wall of horror.
Far away is a place,
Blocked by a wall of horror.

Far away is a place,
Where love and spirit are not acceptable.
Far away is a place,
Where feelings must be hidden to survive.

Far away is a place,
Where a barrier grows and grows;
Farther and farther away is a place,
Farther away it grows.

Amy Kohn, age 11
Mosaic Law Congregation

Photo obtained by: Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry



A new Kremlin book, *The Poison of Zionism* contains the above cartoon of a spider spinning his evil "Zionist" web linking the CIA, huge amounts of dollars, capitalist banks and Congress.



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

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29 Jews left the Soviet Union in October