

AJHS Finding Aid for the Mort Yadin Papers

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Yadin, Mort
Title:	Guide to the Mort Yadin Papers, undated, 1971-1978 *P-943
Dates:	Creation: undated, 1971-1978
Abstract:	The papers of Mort Yadin reflect his work on behalf of Soviet Jews as a member of the Washington Committee for Soviet Jewry and the B’Nai Israel Soviet Jewry Committee. Included are transcripts of Yadin's phone conversations with Jews in the USSR, his correspondence with and on behalf of Soviet Jewish Refuseniks and Prisoners of Conscience. The collection also contains news clippings covering Yadin's activism, materials on events and projects, postal receipts, notes, memos, articles, brochures and photographs.
Identification:	P-943
Extent:	1 Linear Feet
Language:	English, Russian, Hebrew
Repository:	American Jewish Historical Society,

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Historical Note

<p>The Papers of Mort Yadin represent one collection housed within the Archive of the American Soviet Jewry Movement (AASJM). These papers reflect the effort, beginning in the 1960s through the late 1980s, of thousands of American Jews of all denominations and political orientations to stop the persecution and discrimination of Jews in the Soviet Union. The American Soviet Jewry Movement (ASJM) is considered to be the most influential Movement of the American Jewish community in the 20th century. The beginnings of the organized American Soviet Jewry Movement became a model for efforts to aid Soviet Jews in other countries, among them Great Britain, Canada, and France. The movement can be traced to the early 1960s, when the first organizations were created to address the specific problem of the persecution and isolation of Soviet Jews by the government of the Soviet Union.</p>

Mort Yadin was born in what was at the time a Russian-Jewish section of Harbin, northern China. At the age of five he moved with his family to Tientsin, a city that contained a synagogue and a Jewish high school. Yadin joined a Zionist youth movement and in 1949, when he was 18, he went to Israel. He attended the Hebrew University where he studied political science. Following his graduation, Yadin was employed by the Israel Foreign Office for 10 years and was then assigned as an Israel Embassy employee in Washington. He pursued graduate work at the University of Maryland and Drake University in Des Moines, majoring in government and business administration. During his childhood and youth Mort Yadin became proficient in English, Russian, Yiddish and Hebrew and gained some command of Mandarin Chinese and Japanese languages.

In the early 1970s Mr. Yadin, now a real estate broker in Landover, became involved with the Washington Committee for Soviet Jewry that encouraged him to establish direct contact with dozens of Jewish communities and individual Refuseniks all over the Former Soviet Union. Mr. Yadin was involved in the activities, events and projects organized by the Washington Committee for Soviet Jewry and the B’Nai Israel Soviet Jewry Committee. He actively corresponded with Jews in the Soviet Union, American and foreign organizations and individuals interested in the plight of the Soviet Jewry. Starting in May 1971 Mr. Yadin started making phone calls to Sverdlov, Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, Vilna, Leningrad and many other locations all over the Former Soviet Union. During the phone conversations Mr. Yadin obtained the information on the situation of individual Refuseniks and the Soviet Jewish community as a

whole, which was supplied to the national network of the American Soviet Jewry movement organizations. His phone calls also offered the much-needed words of support spoken on behalf of the American Jewry to its Soviet brethren. Mr. Yadin also phoned government officials in the USSR ranging from those in charge of exit visas to superintendents of prison camps. He withstood long waiting hours, resistance and inefficiency, to demand information on the oppressed Soviet Jewish activists, explanation of their mistreatment and to inform the Soviet authorities that their abuse of human rights will not go unnoticed to the world outside the USSR. His phone calls received coverage in the press, radio and television, effectively placing the brutal and inconsistent actions of the Soviet authorities in the media spotlight. Persistent phone calls made by Mr. Yadin and other American Soviet Jewry Movement activists are considered to have resulted in the easement of the official policies towards the Refuseniks and even the occasional releases of the Prisoners of Conscience.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Mort Yadin reflect his work on behalf of Soviet Jews as the member of the Washington Committee for Soviet Jewry and the B'Nai Israel Soviet Jewry Committee. One particular case that preoccupied Mort Yadin was the imprisonment of the prominent Soviet Jewish Zionist and human rights activist Hillel Butman. The collection features Mr. Yadin's correspondence with and on behalf of Mr. Butman during his incarceration in the Gulag prison camps. The collection contains the transcripts of many phone conversations with Jews in the USSR made by Mr. Yadin. The transcripts are in Russian with English translations. The materials also include correspondence, postal receipts, notes, memos, articles, brochures, news clippings and photographs.

The collection consists of two manuscript boxes.

Administrative Information

Physical Location

Located in AJHS New York, NY

Access Restrictions

The collection is open to all researchers, except items that may be restricted due to their fragility, or privacy.

Acquisition Information

Donated by Mort Yadin in 2006.

Digitization Note

This collection was digitized in its entirety with the exception of duplicates.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into a single series.

[Papers of Mort Yadin, undated, 1971-1978](#)

Preferred Citation

Published citations should take the following form:

Description of item, date of item, Papers of Mort Yadin, *P-943, Box #, Folder #, Collection of the American Jewish Historical Society, New York, NY.

Related Material

The Papers of Mort Yadin is one individual collection within the Archive of the American Soviet Jewry Movement (AASJM) located at the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS). Other Soviet Jewry Movement collections at AJHS include the records of [Action for Soviet Jewry \(I-487\)](#), the [National Conference on Soviet Jewry \(NCSJ; I-181 and I-181A\)](#), the [Union of Councils for Soviet Jews \(I-410, I-410A\)](#), [Houston Action for Soviet Jewry \(I-500\)](#), [Bay Area Council for Soviet Jews \(I-505\)](#), [Seattle Action for Soviet Jewry \(I-507\)](#), [The Jewish Chronicle Soviet Jewry Collection \(I-523\)](#), [B'nai B'rith Klutznick National Jewish Museum Soviet Jewry Movement Collection \(I-529\)](#), [Chicago Action for Soviet Jewry \(I-530\)](#), the papers of [Joel Ackerman \(P-787\)](#), [Julia Mates Cheney \(P-806\)](#), [Jerry Goodman \(P-863\)](#), [Laurel and Alan J. Gould \(P-866\)](#), [Carolyn W. Sanger \(P-870\)](#), [Leah Lieberman \(P-869\)](#), Si

Frumkin (P-871), Elaine Pittell (P-873), Sanford A. Gradinger (P-880), Shaul Osadchey (P-882), Leonard S. Cahan (P-883), Doris H. Goldstein (P-887), David H. Hill (P-888), Margery Sanford (P-889), Pinchas Mordechai Teitz (P-891), David Waksberg (P-895), Pamela B. Cohen (P-897), Moshe Decter (P-899), William Korey (P-903), Morey Schapira (P-906), Charlotte Gerper Turner (P-907), Myrtle Sitowitz (P-908), Kathleen M. Hyman (P-911), Babette Wampold (P-912), Rabbi David Goldstein and Shannie Goldstein (P-918), Leslie Schaffer (P-923), Arthur Bernstein (P-925), Dolores Wilkenfeld (P-927), Sylvia Weinberg (P-928), Irwin H. Krasna (P-934), Constance S. Kreshtool (P-935) and Grace Perl binder (P-942).

Additional materials from other collections include records dealing with the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry (SSSJ) located within the [North American Jewish Students Appeal \(NAJSA, I-338\)](#) and the records of the [National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council \(NJCRAC, I-172\)](#). Related records are also located at the AJHS in Newton Centre, MA including [memorabilia and ephemera of the New England Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry \(I-237\)](#) and the [Records of the Student Coalition for Soviet Jewry – Brandeis University \(I-493\)](#).

Use Restrictions

No permission is required to quote, reproduce or otherwise publish manuscript materials found in this collection, as long as the usage is scholarly, educational, and non-commercial. For inquiries about other usage, please contact the Director of Collections and Engagement at mmeyers@ajhs.org.

For reference questions, please email: inquiries@cjh.org

Controlled Access Headings

- Antisemitism
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Human rights
- Jews, Soviet
- Memorandums
- Newsletters
- Pamphlets
- Photographs
- Refuseniks
- Reports
- Soviet Union
- Transcripts
- United States

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Mort Yadin Papers, undated, 1971-1978

Box Folder

1 1 B’Nai Israel Soviet Jewry Committee, undated, 1972-1978

Box Folder

[Digital Item] [B’Nai Israel Soviet Jewry Committee, undated, 1972-1978](#)

1 2 Butman, Hillel (contains photographs), undated, 1971-1975, 1977

[Digital Item] [Butman, Hillel \(contains photographs\), undated, 1971-1975, 1977](#)

1 3 Butman, Hillel – Hillel Butman Drive, undated, 1971-1974

[Digital Item] [Butman, Hillel – Hillel Butman Drive, undated, 1971-1974](#)

1 4 Congressional Record, 1972

[Digital Item] [Congressional Record, 1972](#)

1 5 Correspondence, undated, 1971-1975

[Digital Item] [Correspondence, undated, 1971-1975](#)

2 1 Newspaper Clippings, undated, 1972-1978

[Digital Item] [Newspaper Clippings, undated, 1972-1978](#)

2 2 Notes, Memos, Articles, Brochures, undated, 1971-1975

[Digital Item] [Notes, Memos, Articles, Brochures, undated, 1971-1975](#)

2 3 Postal Receipts, 1971-1972, 1974, 1976

[Digital Item] [Postal Receipts, 1971-1972, 1974, 1976](#)

2 4 Telephone Conversations with Jews in the USSR, undated, 1972-1973

[Digital Item] [Telephone Conversations with Jews in the USSR, undated, 1972-1973](#)