



UCSJ QUARTERLY REPORT

Union of Councils for Soviet Jews • 1411 K Street, NW, Suite 402 • Washington, D.C. 20005 • (202) 393-4117

Circulation 55,000

SEPTEMBER 1985

RABBIS PROSECUTED: ATTORNEY GENERAL CHALLENGED



Thirty-three members of the United States House of Representatives Judiciary Committee sent a letter to Attorney General Edwin Meese, III, questioning the recent decision to prosecute 24 Rabbis and one minister arrested in May for demonstrating at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C. The letter was sent at the request of UCSJ Executive Director Mark Epstein and Matthew Meyers, one of the attorneys representing the Washington area Rabbis and Minister.

The clergy were protesting the Soviets' brutal crackdown on Hebrew teachers and Jewish cultural activists, and the diminishing number of emigrants in recent years. They were arrested and charged with violating a law which prohibits demonstrators from passing within 500 feet of a foreign embassy.

Over the past several months, demonstrations have been held daily at the South African Embassy in Washington. While there were more than 2,000 arrests in connection with these anti-apartheid protests, charges have been dropped in every case. The Judiciary Committee letter asked why, in the Rabbis' case, the government has chosen to prosecute, while an automatic release policy is applied to the demonstrators at the South African Embassy.

In the case of South Africa, the U.S. Attorney acceded to the foreign government's request not to prosecute. Apparently, the Soviets have asked that the Justice Department bring charges against the demonstrators. U.S. officials are

(Turn to RABBIS, page 8)

A MESSAGE FROM REFUSENIK WOMEN TO WOMEN OF THE WEST ...

(This message was sent out just before the International Conference of Women's Organizations in Nairobi.)

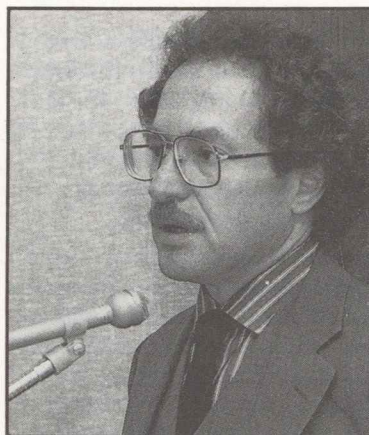
We are addressing this to all women of the West!

We know about the successful fight for women's equality, respect, honor and dignity that you carry on. In the end, your fight is the fight for women's right to happiness.

We are wives, fiancées, mothers and daughters of those people who, in the Soviet Union, are called Refuseniks. Together with them, we are deprived not only of the right to live in the country which we consider to be our own, but are deprived of the right for happiness, normal life, tranquility and confidence in our children's and our own future.

We are different from you in the aspect that we don't fight for our happiness. We are suffering and keeping silent because the course of things at any moment can turn for the worse.

(Turn to REFUSENIK WOMEN, page 8)



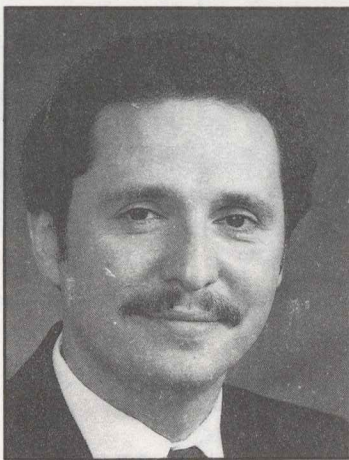
Professor Alan Dershowitz

NOTED LAW PROFESSOR BLASTS ABA ON USSR AGREEMENT

At a UCSJ sponsored press conference held in Washington D.C. in July, Harvard Law Professor and UCSJ Advisory Board Member Alan Dershowitz censured the American Bar Association (ABA) for entering into an agreement with the Association of Soviet Lawyers. The agreement's objectives include promotion of "contacts between American and Soviet lawyers and ongoing cooperation between the two groups."

Among the officers of the Association of Soviet Lawyers (ASL) is Vice President Samuel Zivs, who also serves as the First Vice Chairman of the "Anti-Zionist Committee of

(Turn to LAW PROFESSOR, page 6)



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

President of UCSJ,
Morey Schapira

The spirit of the Union of Councils could be summarized in an eloquent paragraph written by the noted scholar, Lucy Dawidowicz, in her classic book, *The War Against the Jews*.

The prime value that the Jews attached to life itself and to Jewish survival generated an activist tradition that influenced the behavior of the individual and the organized community. The pervasiveness of activism among Jews, especially in the defense of their rights and their existence, derived from the exceptional responsibility that traditional Judaism places on every individual Jew. The obligations to preserve Judaism and the Jewish people have rested not on monarchs or prime ministers, nor on high priests, prophets, or rabbis, but on each Jewish man and Jewish woman.

Each one of us can make a difference in alleviating the plight of Soviet Jews. Individually, our efforts may seem small, but cumulatively, they carry clout. We must never forget that.

This past year for Soviet Jews has been hellish at best. I need not repeat the horrendous litany of events that our people have faced—the shutdown of emigration, the arrests, the beatings, the psychological terror, etc. Some people, including certain leaders in the Jewish community, claimed that our efforts were outmoded and were not having any visible impact on the Soviet government.

Recently, at a meeting between Israeli and Soviet diplomats in Paris, a deal of sorts was proposed by the Soviet diplomat. The Soviets would renew diplomatic relations with Israel, and would allow unlimited repatriation of Soviet Jews to Israel. Israel would withdraw from the Golan Heights, and “anti-Soviet propaganda” (i.e. our activities) in Israel and in Jewish communities around the world would cease. And the Soviets would play a role in the Mideast peace process. In all likelihood, such a deal will not be struck.

It is critical to note that the apparently unflappable Soviet government is still very sensitive indeed to our activities and would like to see them stopped. Those cards, letters, telegrams, protests and ads are indeed having a cumulative effect on the Kremlin. So much so that they had the audacity to propose that we shut down. No way!

Our response to this Soviet overture is reflected in the following statement of Joseph Mendelevich, former Prisoner of Conscience and current chairman of the Soviet Jewry Education and Information Center in Jerusalem.

We, the Soviet Jewry Education and Information Center,

representing Jewish activists in the Soviet Union, appeal to you, the Jews of the United States. Meetings at the ambassadorial level recently took place in Paris between Israel and the Soviet Union. It was announced that discussion regarding repatriation of Soviet Jews to Israel was included. One condition for the release of Soviet Jews would be the cessation of “anti-Soviet propaganda” by Jewish organizations all over the world. (Because of this demand we understand, as should you, that your activities on our behalf are important.)

It is common knowledge that the Soviet Union has always wanted to stop all public activity on behalf of Soviet Jews. To date, the Soviets have failed to prove good will toward Soviet Jews. They have in fact increased rather than decreased persecutions of Jewish activities.

For these reasons, we Soviet Jews appeal to the leadership of American Jewry and in fact to the entire Jewish community of the United States, with the following warning: any cessation of public activity, any attempt at renewal of trade, cultural and scientific contacts with the Soviets, any attempt to cancel the Jackson-Vanik Amendment under present circumstances would be viewed by us as a betrayal of our struggle. In our view, such cessation of activity would be acceptable only after mutual agreement had been reached, honored and effected.

It is imperative, at this period of imminent East-West negotiations at the highest level, that your voices be heard loudly and clearly.

You can rest assured that the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews will continue to raise its voice loudly and clearly until we accomplish our goals. We will not tire. We will not rest. We will do our best to represent the long-term interests of Soviet Jews.

But we can only do it with your help. Yes, your help. President Reagan will be meeting Soviet leader Gorbachev in mid-November. We have a lot of work to do between now and then. Your cards and letters and telegrams will continue to make a difference. Your concern will keep the issue on the agenda when these two world leaders meet. Keep up your level of activity. Better yet, increase it. You and I and all of our 55,000 members and all of our councils' members will make a difference.

If you can, join us at our annual meeting in Washington on October 20-22 as we will meet before the summit to plan and implement our strategy. Your presence in Washington will make a difference! I look forward to seeing you there.

“The obligations to preserve . . . the Jewish people have rested not on monarchs or prime ministers . . . but on each Jewish man and Jewish woman.” (Lucy Dawidowicz in *The War Against the Jews*.)

My best wishes to you and yours for a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Shalom,

Morey Schapira

Morey Schapira, President
Union of Councils for Soviet Jews

USSR TOUR ENDS ABRUPTLY FOR KLEZMER MUSICIANS

A Boston-based musical group on a tour of the USSR was expelled by Soviet authorities who told them they were being “exiled back to the United States” for breaking rules and meeting with “negative persons.”

The four members of the Klezmer Conservatory Band, which plays primarily Yiddish and Jewish ethnic music, arrived in Moscow on May 21 with tourist visas and an assortment of musical instruments. The group planned on meeting and performing for Soviet Refuseniks. Soviet customs officials questioned the musicians for more than five hours and asked if they were “members of an organization hostile to the Soviet Union.”

The musical group spent a few days in Moscow and then flew to Tblisi in the Georgian Republic. They performed in an impromptu concert together with the local “Phantom Orchestra,” so called because authorities have prohibited its existence.



Klezmer Musicians from left to right, Rosalie Gerut, Merryl Goldberg, Hankus Netsky and Jeffrey Warschauer

Orchestra membership is comprised of Soviet Jews, Catholics, Georgians, Armenians and other human rights activists who have been the target of officially sanctioned harassment, searches, beatings and worse. The performers in the Phantom Orchestra, according to the Klezmer group, “are bonded together through a deep emotional connection resulting from constant harassment, physical abuse and, in some cases, imprisonment for expressing their desire to emigrate.” Refusenik brothers Isai and Grigori Goldshtein, founders and leaders of the Phantom group, have been trying to emigrate to Israel for the past 14 years.

Following their meetings with the Refuseniks, the Klezmer group was instructed to stop their activities and warned that they should not continue to stay out so late. At the next stop on their itinerary, the city of Yerevan in Armenia, authorities notified them they were being sent back to the United States immediately.

They were flown back to Moscow, where officials went through their belongings, closely examined their address books and erased cassette recordings. They then went on to Stockholm before departing on a New York-bound

flight on May 30. The group had originally planned on staying in the Soviet Union until June 5. They arrived home on May 31, and held a press conference at Boston's Logan Airport, where they were greeted by cheering family and friends. Hankus Netsky, a member of the group, spoke of the “indelible bond” they had formed with the Refuseniks. “As we breathe a sigh of relief, we cannot forget those we left behind,” he stated.

The Klezmer band called on musicians from all over the world to join in solidarity with the Phantom Orchestra for a concert planned to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Helsinki Accords.

The group was assisted by (Boston) Action for Soviet Jewry, a member council of the UCSJ. ★

FORCED LABOR-MADE GOODS ILLEGALLY IMPORTED INTO U.S.

Upon his appointment, U.S. Treasury Secretary James Baker received a letter from Congress chastising his department for allowing imports of goods made by indentured or forced labor, a violation of U.S. law. If not cleared in advance, the Customs Service is required to hold such products until it determines their status. Apparently, the congressional directive has consistently been ignored.

Signed by a bipartisan group of over 70 Senators and Representatives, the letter calls refusal to enforce the law blatant disregard for the will of Congress. Because of the Treasury's inaction in response to a May 1984 congressional petition on the same issue, 36 members of Congress have jointly authorized a lawsuit against the Treasury Department.

According to the U.S. Customs Commissioner, more than thirty classes of merchandise imported from the USSR are made at least partly by using forced labor. By law, such goods can be imported only if they cannot be obtained from another source.

The State Department has confirmed that Soviet forced labor is used “to produce large amounts of goods for both Western and domestic export markets.” The congressional letter called such labor an “integral part of the Soviet national economy” and said “in refusing to act, the United States (has) become a not-so-innocent bystander to the inhumane treatment of prisoners in the Soviet gulag, more than 10,000 of whom are political prisoners.”

In a related development, Commerce Department Secretary Malcolm Baldrige visited Moscow in May, meeting with Soviet officials to discuss liberalizing trade relations with the USSR, which have been curtailed in the past six years following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and imposition of martial law in Poland. Before Baldrige's visit, he met with UCSJ leadership, who presented him with a copy of the UCSJ position paper, recommending that a relationship be maintained between U.S. trade policy and performance of the Soviet Union in the area of emigration.

Noting that neither side had committed itself to any change in policy, Baldrige was cautious in his judgment of the outcome of the meeting. ★

REFUSENIK UPDATE

ARMEN KHATCHATURYAN, a noted refusenik physicist in Moscow, along with his wife Svetlana and son Karin, began a hunger strike to protest the authorities' refusal to allow the family to be reunited with relatives in Israel. After the Khatchaturyans applied to emigrate, Armen was expelled from three scientific committees, was not permitted to attend scientific meetings and was totally isolated. Contact with him by his Soviet colleagues became a matter of personal courage and Karin was immediately expelled in his fourth year at the Moscow University.

The family was called down to the KGB offices several times in July but refused to appear because they feared that the summons was a deliberate attempt to get the apartment empty to plant drugs or firearms. On one occasion, their entire block was surrounded by KGB, who even tried to force their way into the apartment.

Write to give the family your support:

USSR
Moscow 113467
Kvartat 32A, Apt. 40
Novye Cheremuski Bldg. 5
KHATCHATURYAN, Dr. Armen

INA MEIMAN, a long-term refusenik, has had surgery for a neck tumor and was told that she would have to be readmitted every six months. Her husband, Naum, has been shunted back and forth between the Ministries of Health and Emigration, in a desperate attempt to get permission to emigrate so Ina can be treated in the West.

Telegrams and letters urging the authorities to allow the Meimans to emigrate should be sent to Soviet authorities:

USSR
RSFSR
Moscow 3
Rakhmanovsky Pereulok
KURENKOV, Sergei, Minister of Health

and

USSR
Moscow 103009
6 Ogareva Street
KUZNETSOV, Rudolf
Head of the National OVIR

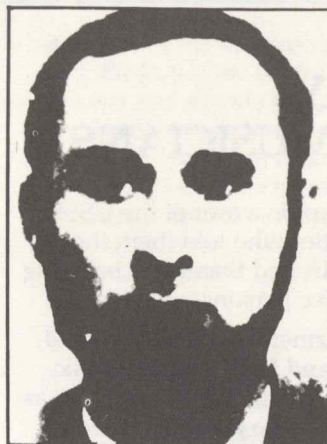
and

get well messages should be sent to:

USSR
RSFSR
Moscow 113127
Naberezhnaya Gorkogo 4/22, Apt. 57
MEIMAN, Ina

YURI FEDEROV, who served the longest sentence for the airplane escape attempt, was released in June after a prison term of 15 years. After his release, his mother witnessed the KGB relentlessly abuse Federov, as a result of which she suffered a heart attack.

Sentenced at age 27, Federov just had his 42nd birthday, but, after the years he served in the Gulag, he is described as looking older than his mother. Letters should be sent to him at:



Yuri Federov

USSR
Vladimirskaya Oblast
Alexandrov
Spartaskovskaya U1. 56
FEDEROV, Yuri

ISAI GOLDSHTEIN, along with eight other citizens of Tblisi, was subjected to ten-hour interrogations/home searches in June. All except two were freed, and those two remain under detention. All nine are members of, or affiliated with, the "Phantom Orchestra," so called because it is made up of individuals who, because of their religious or human rights activities, have been subjected to harassment, beatings and imprisonment. The KGB investigator implied that Isai Goldshtein was at risk of being picked up and arrested at any time. His brother, Grigory, has already served a one-year prison sentence. Corresponding to the Goldshteins is essential—it is their only protection.

USSR
Georgian SSR
Tblisi 80
Octiabrskaya St
2 Microrayon, kv. 2., Apt. 124
GOLDSHTEIN, Isai

and

USSR
Georgian SSR
Tblisi 80
Octiabrskaya St
2 Microrayon, kv. 2., Apt. 63
GOLDSHTEIN, Grigory

POC UPDATE

ALEXANDER KHOLMIANSKY has been permitted to write letters on a regular basis. His health is improved following his ending an eight-month hunger strike in May. He is gaining weight and is working as a net weaver. He had been sentenced in February to eighteen months on a charge of hooliganism. A prominent Hebrew teacher in Moscow, Kholmiansky was the victim of a KGB frame-up in which they planted a gun in his apartment. Write to him at:

USSR
Kamensk Uralski
Sverdlovskaya Oblast
U Shch. 349/47
KHOLMIANSKY, Alexander



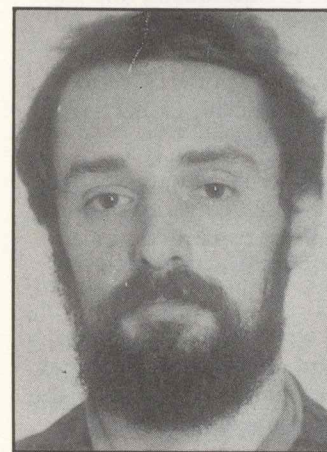
Isai Goldshtein

YULI EDELSHTEIN, charged with trafficking in drugs and sentenced to three years, was permitted to meet with his wife and mother. He was covered with bruises from frequent beatings. He is kept with the worst hard core criminals, who were encouraged by the camp administration to abuse Edelshtein because he is Jewish.

Edelshtein's work at the labor camp entailed saturating railroad ties with a dangerous chemical agent. However, following a visit from a high Interior Ministry official, the treatment toward him improved. His wife, Tanya, saw this as a clear result of pressure and appeals from the West.

Write Yuli to express your continued support:

USSR
Buryatskaya ASSR
Kabinsky Rayon
Pos. Vidrino OV. 94/4
Pervy Otryad
EDELSTEIN, Yuli



Alexander Kholmiansky



Yuli Edelshtein

YOSF BERENSHTEIN of Kiev was finally admitted to the hospital of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Leningrad in May. Berenshtein had been blinded when he was physically attacked in his detention cell. The authorities' relenting can be attributed to a public outcry which included letters from UCSJ members and a Congressional Energy and Commerce Subcommittee to press the authorities to allow him to be hospitalized. Upon his arrival, however, doctors conceded that nothing could be done to improve his eyesight. He was returned to the labor camp at Zhelti Lodi. Protest to authorities and urge that he be released on medical grounds.

USSR
Moscow 103009
6 Ogareva Street
FEDORCHUK, Vitaly, Minister of the Interior

ARRESTED

LEONID (ARI) VOLVOVSKY, Gorky, June 26, after a series of apartment searches. On Saturday, June 13, he was summoned to work for an "urgent" meeting. Mila, his wife, was called to come to their daughter's school immediately. When Volvovsky returned home, he found his apartment door had been tampered with and belongings strewn about. During the last five-hour search of their apartment, for which Volvovsky was away from home, a

number of religious items were taken, all of which were clearly for his own use. Volvovsky is expected to be charged with anti-Soviet propaganda. Three other related searches took place at the homes of Volvovsky's mother, cousin and friend. Following one of the previous searches of his apartment, he found on an outside apartment wall the words, "Death to the Jews," signed by the KKK. Protests should be sent to:

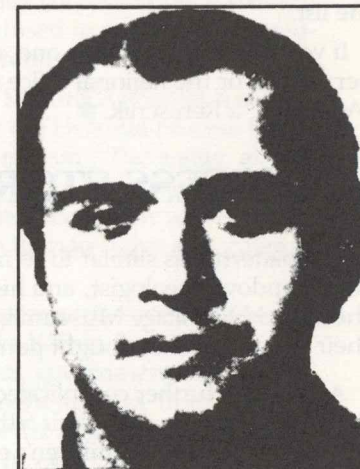
USSR
Gorky
Kreml.
First Secretary of the Party Committee
NIKOLAEVITCH, Yuri

EVGENY KOIFMAN, Dnepropetrovsk, late June, charged with "possession of drugs." His wife met with a prosecutor in the case, who admitted that neither narcotics nor weapons were found; nevertheless, Koifman would not be released. Protest Koifman's arrest:

USSR
Ukrainian SSR
Kiev
2 Kreshchatik
Chief Procurator
GLUKH, F.K.

ALEXEI MURZHENKO of Kiev was imprisoned in June for alleged parole violations. He could get up to five years—his trial is expected in January 1986.

Murzhenko was one of the 15 defendants involved in the 1970 attempt to obtain a plane to fly out of the Soviet Union. He was imprisoned at that time and released 14 years later. His wife Liuba recently gave birth to a baby boy, who tragically died in July. Though Murzhenko is not Jewish, his support for Jewish friends has not diminished throughout his prison sentence.



Alexei Murzhenko

Murzhenko's prison address is:

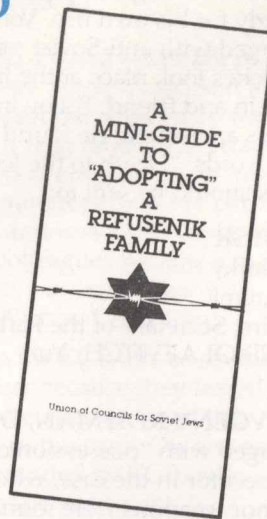
USSR
Kiev 50
Ulitsa Parkomienko 13
YRP 10 4, 45/183
MURZHENKO, Alexei

His wife and daughters' address is:

USSR
Ukrainian SSR
Kiev
Zakrevskogo 36
Apt. 181
MURZHENKO, Liuba

ON WRITING TO REFUSENIKS ...

Some new UCSJ members have told us that they would correspond with Refuseniks and Prisoners of Conscience but don't know how to write in Russian. Fortunately, that is not a problem at all—many Soviet Jews read and write English very well, and the others can have the letters translated. So don't make the language barrier an excuse not to write. Refuseniks and POCs need your continued support.



Another concern that some of our members have expressed is the fear that letters and other contact will somehow increase the danger to Refuseniks and POCs. Actually, the truth is just the opposite! We provide our members with the names and addresses of only those individuals and families who have openly declared their desire to emigrate. It is no secret to the authorities. Since their intentions have already been made public, they feel that they have nothing to lose and much to gain from our letters, which offer them a certain measure of protection. We let them be the judges of what kind of support they need from us, and contact from friends in the West tops the list.

If you don't already have one, please contact your member council or the national office for our Mini-Guide to "Adopting" a Refusenik. ★

A SUCCESS STORY

The pattern was similar to so many others—Alexei Makhmudov, a geologist, and his wife, Elena, a curator at the famed Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, both lost their jobs when they sought permission to emigrate.

Authorities further complicated their situation by demanding that each of their fathers provide certificates approving their adult children's emigration applications. Their fathers were unwilling. Vadim, their son, was beaten in school and ridiculed by his teachers for being the child of Refuseniks. The harassment continued for years.

The UCSJ, and in particular the Bay Area Council for Soviet Jews, were instrumental in publicizing the plight of the Makhmudov family. Bar Mitzvah twinning of Vadim with a local boy and the involvement of U.S. Representative Norman Mineta (D-CA) resulted from their efforts.

The story ends, or begins as it were, on a happy note. In late 1984 the Makhmudov family were fortunate enough to be three of the 29 Jews allowed to leave the USSR. Their success in realizing their dream can be attributed to attention and support they received from friends in the West.

Morey Schapira, President of UCSJ, stated, "We have enough experience to know that when there is a fair degree of pressure, it improves the chances for that case. If nothing is done, it lowers the odds."

The magnitude of their appreciation and relief is apparent in excerpts from the Makhmudovs' first letter written in freedom.

We came to Vienna and embraced our relatives, freedom and security. It was a strange feeling, a mixture of sense, wonder and non-understanding that hostility and hatred were behind us. . . . In all events we shall never forget the brave, noble and clever people who have helped, who remembered and visited and wrote. We know very well that without such support our salvation was impossible. We shall never forget those victims of our government who are not as lucky as we. We send to you our gratitude and love. . . . Shalom. ★

LAW PROFESSOR (continued from page 1)

the Soviet Public." He has published denunciations of Andrei Sakharov, referring to him as a "calumniator and instigator," who "assists the opponents of peace." Further, he attributes the verifiable fact of thousands of Soviet Jews still seeking to emigrate to "juggling of figures by Zionist propaganda." Zivs views have been officially characterized by the U.S. State Department as anti-Semitic.

Dershowitz reproached the ABA for its actions on the grounds that the unqualified reception of Zivs and adoption of the signed agreement could be construed as tacit acceptance of the Soviet legal system's use as a tool to repress its citizens.

"What the Soviet Union most wants from this agreement is international legitimization of its repressive legal system," he observed. "This agreement, co-signed by the most prestigious and largest bar association in the free world, gives it just that."

While Dershowitz wholeheartedly endorsed the concept of cooperative agreements between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, he stressed that such agreements are only appropriate "so long as they are in the interest of furthering and not diminishing human rights."

Consistent with other Soviet-signed agreements, Dershowitz also predicted that neither lawyers nor legal materials critical of Soviet Union would be permitted to enter into the exchange, thus raising the question of whether the agreement can be of any value at all to the ABA. Dershowitz challenged the ABA's decision by drawing an analogy of what public reaction would be if the ABA had signed a cooperation agreement with the official legal organization of the apartheid regime in South Africa. He asked why and how they could enter into such an agreement with the Soviets, based on (in the ABA's own words) "mutual respect."

Dershowitz was joined in his criticism by UCSJ president Morey Schapira, who called the agreement the "ABA's Bitburg," and added, "The Soviet legal system is blatantly violating its own laws and regulations in a vicious anti-Semitic crackdown on Soviet Jews. It offends all Americans to honor the perpetrators of crimes against the Jewish people in the Soviet Union." (Boston) Action for Soviet Jewry played an active role in notifying Dershowitz about the ABA's agreement.

Dershowitz concluded by stating his intention to garner the support of the ABA membership in an effort to induce the ABA leadership to abrogate the agreement. ★

UCSJ MAKES RADIO MACCABEE HAPPEN

The House and Senate have adopted and sent to the President an agreement which could establish a separate U.S. government-sponsored radio broadcasting program for the Jewish population of the Soviet Union.

This agreement grew out of legislation introduced by Senator Paula Hawkins (R-FL) and Representative Matthew Rinaldo (R-NJ). The South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry was instrumental in bringing the need for this type of programming to the attention of these key House and Senate members. The importance of increased Jewish programming was originally highlighted in a proposal submitted to UCSJ leadership by David Waksberg, Executive Director of the Bay Area Council for Soviet Jews.

The legislation was then referred to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, chaired by Congressman Dante Fascell (D-FL) and his International Operations Subcommittee, chaired by Congressman Dan Mica (D-FL) of which Congressman Larry Smith (D-FL) is also a member. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee accepted the bill as proposed by Senator Hawkins and recommended passage.

The full House and Senate approved the legislation that was worked out by the conference committee, which established within the Board for International Broadcasting, a task force to conduct a six month study on increasing programming of general cultural, intellectual, political and religious interest to the Soviet Jewish population. In the interim, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) will strengthen their existing programming on issues of concern to the Jewish population in the Soviet Union.

The Senate version of the bill had called for establishment of a separate Radio Maccabee program not under the auspices of RFE/RL. The conference committee adopted the Maccabee name from the original bill applying it to the increased programming it has instructed RFE/RL to undertake.

UCSJ worked closely with these members of Congress and their staffs in making possible this excellent legislation which not only will result in increased Jewish programming in the Soviet Union but, by its very name, will have great symbolic importance for Soviet Jews. ★

OTTAWA CONFERENCE CLOSES WITHOUT CONCLUDING DOCUMENT

Member nations of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), convened for a human rights "experts" meeting in Ottawa, Canada, and ended the six-week session in June with no concluding document.

The CSCE is comprised of 35 nations including the United States, Canada, the Soviet Union and all of Eastern and Western Europe, with the exception of Albania. The experts were charged with submitting recommendations to the participating states.

This meeting was one of a series of follow-up meetings provided for in the 1975 Helsinki Accords and was called for in the Concluding Document of the CSCE Madrid Review Conference of 1981-1983. The stated purpose of the meetings is threefold: to review implementation records of the three participating states; to consider new proposals necessary to achieve the objectives established by the Helsinki Final Act; and to adopt a concluding document, recommending steps to be included into the Helsinki process.

UCSJ was represented in Ottawa by Executive Director Mark Epstein, Advisory Board Chairperson Lynn Singer, and Public Affairs Director Jesse Jacobs. UCSJ met regularly with members of the U.S. delegation and provided them with the latest information on the status of Refuseniks and POCs. In addition, the delegates were provided with the statement of policy which spells out UCSJ's position on U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union in relation to Jewish emigration.

Mixed Reviews

The results of the Ottawa conference, on the whole, were disappointing to human rights activists. The delegates were unable to come to the unanimous consensus necessary for issuing the concluding document. Thus, no recommendations from this experts meeting can be integrated into the full-scale review conference scheduled for Vienna in 1986.

Nevertheless, a number of Western delegates considered the meeting partially successful since Western and neutral delegations refused to agree to a watered-down, meaningless compromise document.

Undersecretary of State Richard Armacost has observed that "our hopes for the Helsinki process have always been tempered by realism." The reality, as evidenced by the disappointing results of the meeting, brings into question whether there were any concrete gains achieved by Western human rights advocates at Ottawa.

August marked the ten-year anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Accords. Within the human rights community and among U.S. government officials, the tenth anniversary represents a juncture from which the course and outcome of the Helsinki process has been and will continue to be evaluated. ★

Join Us For The
UNION OF COUNCILS FOR SOVIET JEWS
Annual Meeting
October 20-22, 1985
Twin Bridges Marriott, Washington, D.C.

- Meetings with former POCs and Refuseniks
- Briefings by leading U.S. Officials
- Workshops with key activists from the U.S., Israel, England, France, and Canada
- Performance by the Klezmer Conservatory Band (see story, page 3), recently expelled from the USSR

Contact the UCSJ National Office today for details.
We look forward to seeing you!

REFUSENIK WOMEN (continued from page 1)

Our close relatives are being dismissed from their jobs only because they have applied for exit visas to Israel. Thus, we are often being left without means of support and are happy if it is even possible to find a job as a janitor or a night watchman.

Our husbands and sons are being deprived of freedom according to absurd, fabricated accusations. We are left alone with small children, spending hours and hours in lines in prisons trying to pass parcels, to speak to prison authorities or to get permission for a meeting with our husbands.

Our fiances are being arrested several days before official registrations of marriage. Thus, the authorities deliberately deprive us of an opportunity to stand in prison lines or to get meetings; this right being reserved only for official relatives.

During the last months of pregnancy, searches are being conducted in our apartments. At these searches, the authorities confiscate Hebrew textbooks which allegedly contain libel on the great powerful country we live in. It is not accidental that almost every woman Refusenik, who dares to give birth to a child in such conditions, usually suffers from the menace of miscarriage.

And what is going to happen? The present time is not the worst, but it can change at any time. So what to do? To continue keeping silent? We probably could be silent, if we knew there would be an end to all of this. Where is the end to our patience? And where is the end of the authorities' resoluteness to make short work of us? A combination of patience and silence on one hand, and readiness to massacre on the other, can lead to a catastrophe. We know this very well. Today there are people alive who are afraid to look at factory chimneys because they remind them of the incinerators of Auschwitz.

That is the reason for our application to you with the request for help. An application with the hope to be heard.

signed by:

Katya Glazman
Rosa Gorelik
Olga Ioffe
Leah Chernobilskaya

and 97 others

RABBIS (continued from page 1)

in no way bound by the request, however. The decision to prosecute is at the sole discretion of the Justice Department, in this case, U.S. Attorney Joseph E. DiGenova.

The Washington Board of Rabbis, (the sponsors of the demonstration), in commenting on the prosecution of the Rabbis by the Attorney General's office, said, "We believe that it is especially unfortunate that, once arrested, the decision made by the U.S. Attorney to prosecute us was dictated by the Kremlin." Gary Fink, one of the Rabbis arrested, added, "We do not seek special treatment; we simply ask for equal treatment under the law."

Adding a twist of irony, two of those arrested, Rabbi Gerry Serotta and Reverend John Steinbruck, were among those previously arrested at the South African Embassy for protesting against apartheid. The fact that neither was brought to trial for that offense will play an important role in the group's defense.

On June 11, 21 Rabbis were arrested for partaking in a second demonstration at the Soviet Embassy. They stood in front of the Embassy's wrought iron gate and read a statement of protest demanding the release of POCs Ida Nudel, Yosef Berenshtein, Anatoly Scharansky, Iosef Begun and Yuli Edelshtein. This time, when they were arrested and charged, they were held in jail for more than six hours and then released.

The demonstrations are part of a series in an organized national effort by American Rabbis to draw attention to the critical state of Soviet Jewry. ★

WHY ARE UCSJ GIFTS SENT TO MILWAUKEE?

A number of UCSJ members have questioned why the return address on UCSJ donation envelopes is Milwaukee, Wisconsin rather than Washington, D.C. The reason is that the UCSJ engages a Milwaukee firm to receive each gift and maintain the records of our 55,000 members. We use this service because it is far more economical than doing the work ourselves. Thus your gifts and our time are spent on what concerns us most: helping Soviet Jews. ★

UNION OF COUNCILS FOR SOVIET JEWS
1411 K STREET, N.W., SUITE 402
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
UCSJ