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"Saving Soviet Jews"



**By
Florence Fox**

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Foreword

The over-riding issue of our day is that of world peace. Scores of millions in the socialist, capitalist and non-aligned nations of the world are marching, demonstrating, petitioning and praying for the successful conclusion of the Geneva Peace Process.

More and more millions recognize the persistent efforts of the government and the people of the Soviet Union to bring about world peace in our time and to deepen the friendship of the peoples of the world. More and more millions are asking the Reagan Administration: "The Soviet Union has stopped nuclear weapons testing, why can't we?"

Amongst the forces working against the establishment of detente and world peace are those who have spread the canard of "Soviet anti-Semitism."

The *Churchman* made a contribution to the campaign for truth about this question by publishing the article by Florence Fox on: "Soviet Jewry." The editors of *Jewish Affairs* recognized in the article an effective, truthful and principled approach and asked for permission to reprint it. We have since received so many favorable comments about the article that we have decided to publish it as a pamphlet which includes an added section.

This pamphlet is published in the interest of having the truth about the status of Soviet Jewry brought to the widest sections of our people and in the interest of buttressing the people's movements in the United States and world wide for world peace.

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By Florence Fox

Of all anti-Soviet fabrications, none is more blatantly false and pernicious than the allegations on "anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union."

Soviet socialism delivered the Jews from the ghettos and pogroms of tsarist Russia.

Jakov Sverdlov, a Jew, was the first president of Soviet Russia, and the Soviet Union was the first nation to recognize the state of Israel.

On U.N. Day (12/10/45), Albert Einstein, a Jew, expressed his gratitude to the Soviet Union, the only state to open its borders to tens of thousand of German, Polish and other Jews fleeing the Nazis in 1938-1939.

When Hitler launched World War II, only the Soviet union protected its Jews by evacuating them to safety beyond the Urals. Israel's former leader, Menachem Begin, one of the Jews rescued, wrote in his autobiography: "I cannot forget, and no Jew should forget that . . . thanks to the Soviet Union, hundreds of thousands of Jews were saved from Nazi hands."

If the Red Army had not checked fascism, Jewry today would be reduced to a mere handful of hunted survivors. Soviet Jews now share the freedom, democracy, economic security and human rights guaranteed to all citizens by the Soviet Constitution.

In 1985, Boris Gramm, leader of the Jewish community in Moscow, ordered 20,000 copies of a Jewish pocket calendar in Hebrew and Russian to be produced by the state printing house in time to celebrate Rosh Hashonah at the recently renovated Moscow Choral Synagogue. It had previously published prayer books and the *Five Books of Moses*.

As an example of the good relations between the Jewish community and the municipality, Gramm cited the closing of Arkhipov Street, the site of the synagogue, during certain holidays to permit traditional dancing in the street by Jewish youth. He noted the synagogue's increasing income and observed that the life of the Soviet people

was becoming better and more prosperous with each passing year. . . . "Jews enjoy absolutely the same rights as all other Soviet people We'll never forget it was the Soviet Army that saved us from extinction. Our duty today is to devote all our energy to efforts for peace against the threat of nuclear war."

The population of the U.S.S.R. is 270 million, of which 1.8 million — only 0.7% — are Jews. However, Jews comprise 15% of Soviet doctors; more than 8% of all writers; over 10% of all judges and lawyers; 5.7% scientists — half of them top specialists (8 times more than other Soviet nationalities); and 8% of all artists, musicians, actors and actresses.

Two cabinet members are Jews. Eight Jews are members of the Supreme Soviet. Jews are heavily represented in the USSR Council of Ministers, Republics and Party bodies. There were more than 100 Jewish Soviet Army generals in World War II, 160,000 Jews received military honors, and 117 were awarded the nation's highest honor — *Hero of the Soviet Union*.

Jewish members of the Soviet Academy of Science, Yiddish writers, and other valued Jewish citizens are recorded in the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*.

The American Jewish Year Book (1985) acknowledged Soviet encouragement of Jewish culture in literature, research, music, drama, religion and art, and notes awards of state prizes to Jews for distinguished achievement.

There are more Soviet Jews with advanced education in proportion to their numbers than in all western countries and Israel combined. The proportion of educated Jews, (25%) is higher than that of any other nationality in the USSR — 329 per 1,000 as against 196 per 1,000 other inhabitants, and 65,000 Jews have PhD's.

The Leningrad Institute for Eastern Studies, and the Judaica collection of rare books and manuscripts in Moscow's Lenin Library are world famous - unparalleled for Judaica research by Jewish scholars worldwide.

Soviet scholars study ancient Hebrew history, culture and philology in institutes attached to the USSR Academy of Sciences. At the Gorky Institute of World Literature in

Moscow, advanced literary courses are conducted for aspiring authors, including those writing in Yiddish. A rabbinical college (yeshiva) is attached to the synagogue in Moscow to serve the 10% of Jews who are religious. Jews train their rabbis, observe religious holidays, perform traditional rites, bake matzohs, prepare kosher foods, publish their literature, and maintain ties with Jews in Israel and other countries.

More Jewish literature is published in the USSR than in any other country in the world. *Sovietish Heimland* publishes both Soviet and foreign Jewish authors and has a special section for the self-teaching of Yiddish. It is read throughout the USSR and thirty countries abroad, and has the widest circulation of any Yiddish magazine worldwide.

A new Jewish-Russian dictionary published in 1984 included 40,000 entries and a grammar text.

The books of over 100 Jewish writers have been translated into fifteen other Soviet languages in the last decade. Lev Kvitko's books alone sold 9,300,000 copies. Hebrew literature is also reproduced, e.g., the revered 11th century Hebrew poet, Jehuda Hallewi.

Central Television recently presented a TV mini-series, *Tevye the Milkman* by the celebrated Jewish writer, Sholem Aleichem, in whose honor a Kiev street was named. Hundreds of other respected Jews have Soviet streets named for them. Jewish theatrical and musical companies tour the country, playing to packed houses. The United States, with over three times as many Jews as the USSR, hasn't a single permanent Yiddish theatre.

In 1928, twenty years before Israel became a state, the Soviet Union gave Jews their own autonomous region on 36,000 square kilometers of arable land — twice the size of Israel, and as big as Belgium and Holland combined, with Birobidjan its capital. Their newspaper, *Birobidjaner Shtern*, is published in Yiddish, and books in both Yiddish and Hebrew fill their libraries.

An Open Letter to Jewish Americans from Jews in the Soviet Union(1983) was signed by prominent Jewish leaders in the Soviet government, sciences, industry and arts: "We Soviet Jews do not need self-appointed 'protec-

tors' from across the ocean. We have no need to be protected from anyone or anything in our own country. . . . The reality fully refutes the slanders of western propaganda to the effect that 'official anti-Semitism' exists in the USSR. Only people who know nothing at all about the situation in our country can believe that invention. . . ."

Despite the favorable egalitarian, economic and political environment, some Jews emigrate for reasons which have nothing to do with the way they are treated in the Soviet Union.

1. Some leave for reasons of religious orthodoxy which mandates return to the land of their biblical ancestors, expressed in the centuries old prayer: *Next year in Jerusalem.*

2. The late Golda Meir stressed to members of the Knesset that it costs Israel 30,000 pounds to educate a doctor, which it could ill afford. Her solution was simple: — lure to Israel the Soviet Jews whose education and training had already been paid for by the Soviets. This massive brain drain was to be justified by a propaganda campaign to "Save the Russian Jews."

The Soviet law which permits emigration for reunification of families dispersed throughout the world during World War II precipitated a flood of invitations from Israel to Soviet Jews to **reunite** with real as well as bogus relatives in Israel. Israeli officials note with alarm that most Jews who leave the Soviet Union, presumably to rejoin relatives in Israel, do not truly intend to settle in Israel. The campaign to recruit Soviet Jews grows increasingly urgent as Israel faces an exodus — not only of immigrants, but native Sabras as well. Since the mid-70's disenchanting emigre Jews began returning to the USSR in droves.

Philip Bonosky in *Political Affairs* stated: ". . . . It is Zionism and America's Middle East policy and not the Soviets who need anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union! And where it doesn't exist, it must be made to exist, one way or the other. . . . A campaign of letter writing to Jews in the USSR organized by Jews in the USA and Israel, describe life in America (less so, now, in Israel where the dream has faded) as still the gleaming paradise of opportunities

where rewards are instant. Although emigres tell themselves that they are going to America to better themselves, they know in their hearts that they are selling anti-Sovietism. And America is buying it." The truth is that most emigres come to the U.S.A. to get rich under capitalism.

3. Emigration is instigated by Jewish "tourists", Zionist activists promoting emigration to Israel (aliyah), and by CIA sponsored anti-Soviet propaganda beamed by the Voice of America, Voice of Israel and Radio Free Europe — which incite defection. It is ironic that some of the most strident voices protesting alleged mistreatment of Jews in the Soviet Union have been those of rabid anti-Semitic Nazi war criminals who were given sanctuary after World War II by the United States where some, like Nazi-collaborator Anton Adamovich, were assigned to lucrative posts on Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. (Washington's disgraceful protection of Nazi perpetrators of the Holocaust was later compounded by President Reagan's gravesite tribute to Hitler's S.S. at Bitburg.)

4. Although anti-Sovietees claim that Jews emigrate to escape "oppression", some flee to escape prosecution for criminal acts. A *New York Daily News* report (4/16/84) cited a "nationwide network of lawless Russian immigrants. . . . involved in murder, drug trafficking and counterfeiting. . . . "the country's newest crime syndicate. . . . hardened criminals from Soviet jails with bogus documents saying they were imprisoned as political dissidents. . . . Information gleaned by the FBI and police departments across the country reveal that the mob's power base is in the Russian enclave in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, where they terrorize other members of the Soviet emigre community. At least 150 ringleaders and top associates nationwide. . . . are involved in systematic crimes."

Detective Charles Damiano of the 60th police precinct in Brooklyn stated (*Jewish Times, Feb. 1984*) that the criminals are referred to simply as "Soviet emigres", but a listing of their names reveals that they are Jewish, something that is not widely publicized. The crime network extends to Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Miami, Philadelphia, Portland, Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg, — with inter-

national connections.

Jews who request exit visas from the USSR for **any** reason are termed **dissidents** by the West. However, the West, which exploits them as **champions of human rights**, fails to publicize their crimes. Shcharansky, for instance, was convicted for espionage — arranging to deliver intelligence data on Soviet defenses to the West, and collaborating with foreign centers of anti-Soviet subversion.

Soviet emigres learn that the more tales of "oppression" they relate, the more acceptance, sympathy and favors they receive from Jewish communities in the U.S.— which they milk to the limit. Most of those who claim the need for "religious freedom" by-pass the religious state of Israel, and surveys show that most Soviet Jewish emigres do not practice their religion or participate in Jewish affairs in the U.S.

While working for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) some time ago, I learned what happened to Soviet emigres in New York City. They were obliged to fill out forms indicating previous education and work history for placement purposes. I was amazed to learn of the general superior level of education and positions they had in the USSR.

Despite language difficulties, chronic unemployment and the housing crisis plaguing the U.S., these newcomers had been led to expect jobs as good or better than those they had back home. The immediate problem facing HIAS was to provide housing for their new charges. The housing shortage obliged them to be moved in with immigrants previously sheltered in overcrowded quarters.

Only 1.2% of Soviet Jews emigrating to the U.S. have found employment in occupations related to their professional training. Most must settle for low-paying menial jobs and sub-standard working conditions. After a few months in the U.S., their sponsoring agencies leave them to shift for themselves. They are further Americanized in unemployment and welfare offices.

The majority of emigres experience culture shock when they discover that in this free country, nothing is free, and they are confronted with problems of survival

they did not have back home. And they are shocked to learn that anti-Semitism exists in the United States. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith records hundreds of anti-Jewish incidents — unknown in the USSR where such deeds are officially outlawed.

Nazi-type movements in the U.S. are free to publish anti-Semitic literature for distribution in the U.S. and to fascists in West Germany.

Whereas Jewish doctors practice their profession freely in the Soviet Union, they encounter unaccustomed discrimination when they "defect" to the United States. Arkady Fishman, spokesman for 34 Jewish emigre doctors, lodged a complaint with the U.S. government when, after passing all qualification exams in medicine and English, their applications were turned down by 800 hospitals, including some in Alaska. U.S. medical establishments do not welcome foreign-born doctors practicing medicine in the land of the free.

Some emigres, their illusions shattered, and unable to return to their homeland, have committed suicide. Their stories have not been publicized. An official of HIAS told me sadly: "How I wish someone would tell the Jews in the Soviet Union how much better off they would be to stay where they are."

Disillusioned emigres succumb to feelings of guilt for having betrayed their country, their family and friends. Their letters to Soviet officials pleading for readmission to the USSR have reached flood proportions. They find life in the capitalist jungle alien after growing up in the spirit of socialism in a country which provides lifetime security for all. They belatedly appreciate all the benefits guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution, which they had taken for granted.

Jewish Colonel-General David Dragunsky, twice honored *Hero of the Soviet Union*, denounced the "Save Soviet Jews" propaganda: **"Save us from what? From the full equality we enjoy? From the peaceful and steady progress we have made under socialism? The enemies of peace base their insane nuclear arms race, their mad Star Wars, on lies about the Soviet Union. Jewish people should re-**

member who saved millions of Jews from the gas chambers, who shed so much blood to defeat fascism."

As a Soviet Jew who remains loyal to his country, Dragunsky was not welcome in the U.S. which denied him a visa to attend a dinner in his honor in New York City in 1985. □

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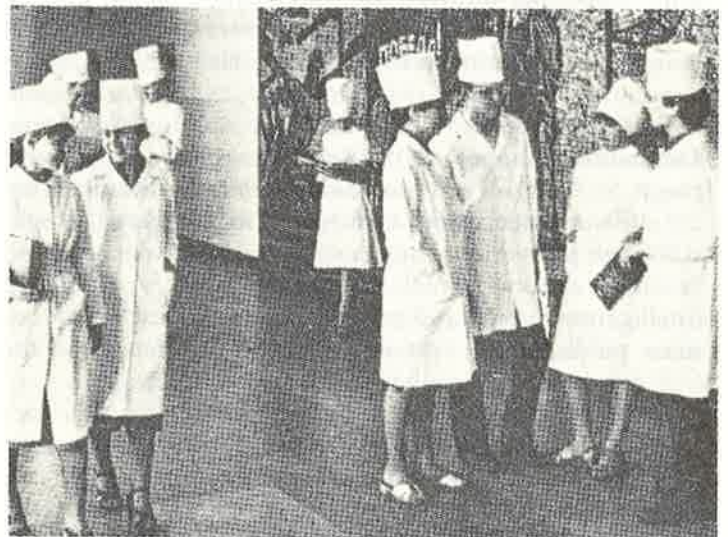
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A Yiddish primer published
in Khabarovsk in 1982.



The Birobijan medical school, one of the oldest in the Soviet Far East, trains nurses, assistant doctors, and obstetricians.

"Saving Soviet Jews"

by Florence Fox

Part 2

The campaign to "Save Soviet Jews" has been so pervasive that the Soviet law governing emigration has been construed as a discriminatory anti-Jewish law, whereas Soviet laws apply to all citizens equally.

Although Zionists allege special restrictions placed on Soviet Jews wishing to emigrate, they carefully obscure the fact that it is difficult for most Jews who wish to defect from Israel, and impossible for many who are forced to remain because they cannot afford to pay up all debts before leaving (an Israeli requirement for emigration), including repayment for their initial resettlement and other benefits.

American Jews, who, on cue, mobilize protests against alleged Soviet abuses, do not organize similar actions to protect Jewry elsewhere. Jacobo Timmerman authored the best-selling *Prisoner Without a Name-Cell Without a Number* after leaving Argentina where he was imprisoned and tortured for publishing criticism of anti-Semitism and other abuses of the former dictatorship. He emigrated to Israel where he was the darling of the Jewish community - until he defected in protest against Israeli-U.S. support of neo-fascist regimes such as Argentina. Timmerman's appeal to organized Jewry to wage a campaign to "Save Argentine Jews" suffering "disappearance", unwarranted arrest, torture and murder was ignored. Although Jews in the United States privately deplore anti-Semitism at home, Israeli-Washington military, economic, intelligence-sharing and political ties inhibit any organized mass public demonstrations against anti-Semitism in the U.S.A. which might embarrass the administration.

The propaganda barrage designed to lure defectors from the USSR does not reveal the following facts of life abroad — which emigres learn belatedly:

The people of Israel live in a constant state of apprehension with mounting economic, political and military problems and a bleak future. The land proclaimed as "the

only democracy in the mideast", where an orthodox hierarchy representing less than 10% of the population imposes its increasingly stringent laws on a non-observant majority, is torn by war with its neighbors and rising internecine strife.

The Israeli orthodoxy which by narrow definition would exclude most of the world's Jewry from official recognition, would consign them to electoral oblivion now and eternal hell fire thereafter. They propose to saddle Israelis with identification cards stigmatized with the divisive word "converted", — setting apart Jews by choice from first-class Jews by birth. This, at a time when I.D.'s which discriminate against South African Blacks are on the way out.

The numbers of Jews leaving Israel, a nation of 3.5 million Jewish immigrants, have exceeded those coming in for the past few years, partly as a result of the poor economy and the unease stirred by the war in Lebanon. Israeli Minister of Immigration, Yaacov Tsur, predicts immigration in 1986 will be the lowest since Israel came into being, exceeding the record low of 1985. Alarmed and embarrassed by the continuing exodus of Jews from Israel, they are trying to halt the trend. They apply the epithet "yordim" (Hebrew, fall from grace) and impose restrictive measures against those who leave.

The reality of life in the United States is in sharp contrast to the notions fostered by CIA-sponsored broadcasts to foreigners, and by *Dynasty* and *Dallas*, the two American television shows most favored by viewers abroad — which create the illusion that America is a land of millionaires.

Emigres discover chronic unemployment, an acute housing shortage, inflation, racism, pornography, crime and drug addiction. They find that the cost of medical care and education, free under socialism, are prohibitive elsewhere. Rents pegged at 3-5% of income in their Soviet motherland, are exorbitant in the U.S. Day care and summer camps for children, and family vacations largely subsidized by the Soviets, are unaffordable luxuries for most Americans. Public transportation and utilities in the U.S.

are not the low cost services provided in the land they left.

Emigres learn that 35 million people live below the official poverty level, — that 40% of all children are reared in poverty and many go to bed hungry. Infant mortality is rising. The meager social security benefits for the elderly are in constant jeopardy. Farms and homes are foreclosed to an extent unknown since the Great Depression. A growing army of homeless street people throughout the nation forage in trash bins and sleep wherever they can — subject to imminent assault.

Geri Jones, a resident of California's affluent North Country, expressed her concern in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times* (Dec. 29, 1985):

"A pregnant mother and her four small children are being shifted from shelter to shelter; in between they live on the streets. An elderly woman, suffering from a debilitating mental illness, is living in an old automobile with her sole companion — a little dog.

"These are not isolated incidents, but current examples of every day reality. The pathetic situations described here didn't occur in some remote village in faraway Mexico, in the African sub-Sahara, or the worst part of Harlem, New York. No, these cases are occurring today, with regularity, right here in your city, in your neighborhood, on your block. . . . Hundreds of migrant workers live in deplorable conditions, such as foxholes dug into the soil — or those sleeping in parks."

Hunger is especially reprehensible in California, which produces 25% of the nation's food.

The disillusionment of countless Soviet Jewish emigres is poured out in stories like that of film director Rashid Atamlabokov, who left the USSR for the golden promise of America — and found odd jobs such as selling hot dogs. Describing his defection as a "moment of insanity", he states: "I left my wife and son behind, expecting to bring them later. Now, I don't want them to come."

I anticipate flak from well-meaning Jews — and others — who hurl unwarranted charges at the country which did more to save world Jewry than any in history. Public men-

tality has become so steeped in hate-Russia indoctrination as to be impervious to any facts depicting the USSR in a favorable light. Those who hazard such information are accused of treason or being "dupes of the Kremlin."

It is said that a lie can race ten times around the world while Truth is still tying its laces. Counteracting the **big lies** about the Soviet Union is literally a herculean task. As soon as Hercules cleaned out the Augean stables, another load was evacuated. By the time one anti-Soviet invention is disproved, another is fabricated.

Hitler's use of the Big Lie (i.e., any lie, no matter how outrageous, will be believed if repeated authoritatively and long enough) was exemplified in a Phil Donahue show (6/28/86), *A Citizens' Summit II* — a satellite-linked women-to-women discussion from studios in Boston, USA, and Leningrad, USSR. The American audience, preconditioned by a 67 year anti-Soviet campaign, reacted with hostility and disbelief to anything emanating from socialist sources. One of the Soviet women, appalled by questions rehashing slanders, asked "Why don't you trust us?" Resolutely non-receptive, the Americans based most of their questions, which were in fact accusations, on Soviet treatment of Jews.

A Soviet Jewish woman — who made it clear that the Soviet group was not selected by their government to participate in the discussion but were randomly invited by the American producers, stated emphatically that Jews in the USSR are much better off than those in the USA and that, although she likes to visit America, she wouldn't want to live there. She also explained that the reason there were now less Jewish emigres was because Jews who return to the USSR tell others about their disillusioning experiences abroad as compared to the security of their homeland.

Overblown publicity about a handful of "refusenik" opportunists implies that all Soviet Jews are straining to emigrate. This is an insult to the 1,600,000 loyal Jews building socialism as proud Soviet citizens. Professional anti-Sovietees advance varying numbers of Jews allegedly anxious to emigrate. At the moment 400,000 seems most popular. When asked how this number was arrived at, a

propagandist on TV responded: "That's how many invitations were sent from abroad."

In lamenting the declining numbers of Jews leaving the USSR, Soviet detractors fail to recognize the obvious fact that most of those who wished to leave have already done so. Quite simply, there are less of them as time goes by.

Moreover, secularization and increasing intermarriage in the USSR, as in the U.S. and other countries, leads to a declining number of religious Jews. An estimated 300,000 Soviet children of mixed marriages, who are allowed to choose their nationality, have opted for that of their non-Jewish parent.

Jewish partisans range from extremists who feel that Israel can do no wrong and the Soviet Union can do no right — to their opposites who regularly visit their Jewish relatives in the USSR and return with glowing reports.

The "Jewish question" is emotion-charged and volatile. Tempers flare, family ties are strained, and investigatory calm is sacrificed. Much confusion and heat have been raised by the issue of Zionism, about which many professed Zionists know little. Zionism has been projected as a benign movement dedicated to the ingathering of the historically persecuted Jews to their own "promised land", where they may at long last reside safely, proudly and openly as Jews. Zionists have effectively planted the equation that Zionism = Judaism = Israel, with the result that anyone criticizing the politics of Zionism or Israel is subject to being labelled anti-Semitic.

Since the paramount issue today is world peace versus omnicide, those who lend themselves to the cold war and resultant hot war should not claim political immunity behind the facade of religion. Many Jewish intellectuals, Jewish to the core, have compiled documentation on political abuses by Zionists, — which information is resisted by Jews preconditioned by systematic slander to believe only ill of the USSR. One would expect all Jews to rejoice about the equality enjoyed by their "landsmann" in the USSR. But having one's mindset disturbed is always unsettling and unwelcome and they remain virulently antagonistic.

On our first visit to Moscow in August of 1983, my husband and I visited the Choral Synagogue and wandered into a room where teenagers were learning Hebrew. On coming home, we found that the *Los Angeles Times* (8/18/83) had front paged a story about the same Moscow synagogue, stating that "The teaching of Hebrew (in the USSR) is forbidden."

Such anti-Soviet fabrications are supplemented by Western correspondents stationed in Moscow who dispatch material tailored to satisfy the demand for stories about "persecution of Soviet Jews", while ignoring readily available evidence of Soviet enhancement of Jewish life and culture.

During our visit, we asked the rabbi why his government would not allow Jews to have matzohs on Passover. "Come" he said, "I'll show you where we manufacture our matzohs. On Pesach, we have an exchange program with rabbis in Brooklyn and we send matzohs to each other."

We took pictures with the woman who laughingly referred to herself as the "shamus of the mikvah" (ritual bath for women), who told us she had returned to the Soviet Union after having lived with sister in Israel for two years. We asked why she hadn't remained with her sister. "Why should I when I'm much better off here, — I love my work here in the shul, and my salary is in addition to my retirement pension. I have a small flat, but for me alone it's enough. It's close by and I walk to work."

From Moscow we flew to Central Asia where we spent a few delightful days in Tashkent, in Uzbekistan, which has a large Jewish community. When Hitler invaded the USSR, the Soviet government removed Jewish citizens from Hitler's path by resettling them beyond the Urals — an undertaking unprecedented in history. After the war, the Jews who had been relocated to Tashkent liked it so well that they decided to stay there.

Our questions about the treatment of Soviet Jews were best summed up by a group of Jewish friends we met in the *Park of Culture and Rest*. They were dismayed by allegations about Jewish oppression. "Speaking for myself" said our host who had invited us to share their table

to enjoy some of their sinfully rich ice cream, "I was educated at government expense in the field of my choice, and I now have a prestigious job as a bio-chemist. I have a wide circle of friends, as you can see, and we enjoy all the cultural advantages this beautiful city has to offer. So how are we oppressed?" His friends offered similar personal accounts. "Well", I persisted, "They say you have no freedom.". He was incredulous. Controlling his indignation, he said, "Perhaps different countries have varying concepts of freedom. To my mind, if a person has no job and no income, he has no freedom. He has only freedom to starve. Full employment is one of the basic freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution."

We asked whether anti-Semitism existed in the USSR. "Of course" he answered. "It exists everywhere, especially in your country which permits a KKK and an American Nazi Party. Unfortunately, we cannot extinguish racism totally by illegalizing it. Our Constitution (article 123) states that all preaching of racial and national discrimination, anti-Semitism included, is punishable by law. Some 130 nationalities who were historically at war with one another, now live in total amity, equality and peace, devoid of racism. But there are inevitably lingering vestiges of anti-Semitism in a country emerging from a history of Czarist pogroms. Some Soviet women resented the fact that when World War II ended, many Jewish women whose families had been safely relocated, were able to renew their lives with their menfolk, whereas non-Jewish Soviet women lost their husbands, fathers, sons and brothers who died fighting Hitler's legions. Such bitterness is difficult to overcome."

The following night they invited us to a posh Jewish wedding where guests representing many nationalities danced the hora with their Jewish friends.

Soviet Jews, exasperated by campaigns to "Save Soviet Jews", have sent numerous open letters to their fellow Jews and to government officials in the U.S. The following *Open Letter from Soviet Parliamentarians of Jewish Nationality to U.S. Congressmen* expressed alarm over unrestrained acts of anti-Semitism in the U.S.

"On November 9, 1985, fourteen Jewish-owned shops were vandalized in New York. The criminal action resulted from anti-Semitism, which is becoming increasingly evident in the United States. Similar acts of vandalism on November 9, or *Kristallnacht* (also called the *Night of Broken Glass*) 47 years ago, marked the beginning of the Jewish pogroms and the death-camp extermination of Jews in Nazi Germany.

"According to the American press, last year's officially registered anti-Semitic outrages exceeded 700 in the United States, including attacks on Jewish organizations and individuals.

"Jews are also covertly discriminated against. They are not admitted to certain neighborhoods, prestigious clubs, educational establishments and professions. One-third of the 175 companies building rental housing in New York do not lease apartments to Jews. Over 800,000 U.S. Jews live below the official poverty level. About 700 business and professional clubs in 46 states deny membership to Jews. A poll of the Jewish population in the District of Columbia and the city of St. Louis, Missouri, alone revealed that most had been victims of anti-Semitism.

"We share the Soviet people's concern about a wave of anti-Semitism sweeping the United States, with its six-million strong Jewish community, and call upon the Congress, the Administration and the President to take effective steps to stop the spread of anti-Semitism, a phenomenon beneath the dignity of civilized society." □

The above appeal was signed by the following **Jewish Deputies of the Supreme Soviet**: M.V. Khaikin (Ukraine); R.L. Barg (Ukraine); S.I. Palei (Byelorussia); R.G. Geller (USSR); E.G. Gurevich (Azerbaijan); M.D. Davitiashvili (Georgia); M.A. Levitsky (Tajikistan); M.I. Katz (USSR); Y.I. Kopylov (Russian Federation); Y.I. Plitman (USSR).
