

WASHINGTON DATELINE

By Trude B. Feldman

ISRAELITE'S WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT

One morning this week a rushed announcement was sent to me. It read: "The 'New Washington Committee For Human Rights No' will meet you and other newsmen in the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel at noon. There, you will be briefed and transported to an 'action-packed' news event."

At the designated hour I went to the Mayflower Hotel, as did eight other newsmen. We were taken -- by an unidentified man -- to the Embassy of the Soviet Union. The gate surrounding the Embassy was locked. But, handcuffed to the gate were 18 boys and girls of college age. They had chained themselves to the fence in front of the Embassy to bring world attention to the urgency of the plights of the Jews in the Soviet Union. The 18 represented the 18 Russian Jewish families who had recently sought aid from the United Nations to assist them in emigrating to Israel. Each of the protesters carried a card with the name of one of those families.

Several of the youths wore Yarmulkas. There were non-Jews among the 18, (4 women, 14 men). A spokesman for the group, said the demonstration a peaceful one, but one which caused excitement on the busy street during lunch hour, was staged to symbolize the "captive condition" of the 3 1/2 million Jews who are being persecuted in the Soviet Union.

They also carried a replica of the 10 Commandments as well as signs which read: "Free the 18"; "Free the 3 million"; and "Freedom Now".

Embassy officials called the police, who advised the youths that they were violating a law demonstrating within 500 feet of a foreign embassy. They were given a choice of leaving the premises or being arrested. They remained silent. The police left. About ten minutes later, the law enforcement officer returned, and again asked -- in a polite manner -- that they leave the Em-

bassy. They didn't reply. They chose to remain there. An Embassy official came out and displayed anger to the police. Finally, a paddy wagon was called. The policeman used a 36-inch bolt cutter to cut the chain and free the students from the gate. They walked quietly -- as they dramatically clenched their fists -- to the police wagon. They chose to be arrested -- on charges of demonstrating within 500 feet of a foreign Embassy, and interfering with diplomatic offices.

In a "Statement Of Concern", the group stated that they were calling on the Soviet Union -- in the name of humanity and justice -- to eliminate the official anti-Jewish press campaign; to permit Jewish education in the Soviet Union in all its forms; to allow Jewish cultural institutions and Jewish artistic life; to remove obstacles to Jewish religious life; to allow religious and cultural bonds with Jewish communities of the world; to permit separated Jewish families to be reunited; to undertake a vigorous educational campaign against anti-Semitism; to permit free emigration of the Jews in the Soviet Union; and to free -- immediately -- the 18 families, and allow their emigration.

LOS ANGELES (WNS) -- The Jewish Federation Council of Los Angeles has set up the Menorah Housing Foundation to buy land for low-cost housing for the elderly.

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