

Soviet Jewish Boy Asks Favor Of Samantha Smith



Avi Goldstein, the 9-year-old son of a well-known refusenik family, sent a letter to Samantha Smith prior to her Soviet-sponsored trip, asking that she deliver a message to Yuri Andropov "because he never answered my letters sent directly to him."

The Bay Area Council on Soviet Jewry (a member of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews) received a copy of the boy's letter, dated May 10, which was addressed to "the lucky American girl who received a letter from Mr. Andropov himself."

"My parents applied for exit visas to Israel two years before I was born and got refused," wrote Avi. "...So I have experienced a lot: imprisonment of my uncle in 1978, searches of our apartment, etc. The goal of my letter is not to make you pity me, not at all. I just want you to forward my letter to Mr. Andropov." The boy's letter asked that he and his parents and his uncle and grandmother be allowed to live in Israel.

Avi's father, Isai, and his uncle, Grigory, were first refused permission to emigrate in 1971 because of "security reasons." Both are physicists and were immediately fired from their jobs upon applying.

Since then, the Goldsteins have suffered continuous persecution by the KGB (secret police). Their phone was disconnected, they were forbidden to travel outside their city, they have been threatened and attacked in the streets. In 1978, Grigory was charged with "parasitism" and served one year's strick regime in a labor camp.

After nine years of waiting, and in the desperate hope that without him, Avi and his

mother might finally be given visas to go to Israel, Isai applied for and was granted a divorce from his wife, Elizaveta. Nothing came of this, however, and the Goldsteins remain - like tens of thousands of other Soviet Jews - in a state of perpetual refusal at a time of growing anti-Semitism in the USSR.

Avi Goldstein has grown up in an atmosphere of constant tension. He suffers severe headaches, and because of this, his vision has been impaired.

Hoping that Samantha Smith might agree to

take his letter to her Soviet host, Avi wrote of the possible results of her efforts: The answer could be exit visas for my family. If so, you won a victory in the human rights fight. If not, you know more about human hypocrisy."

Eleven-year-old Samantha Smith left the Soviet Union July 21, never having met directly with Yuri Andropov. The Bay Area Council urges that letters of support be sent to Avi Goldstein; Oktyabskaya St., 2nd Mikrorayon; Building 2, Apt. 124; Tbilisi; Georgian SSR, USSR.

Shultz Addresses U.S. Policy Towards West Bank Settlements

WASH. (WNS) — The United States remains opposed to construction of new Israeli settlements on the West Bank, but according to Secretary of State George Shultz, the Jews who now reside in the occupied territories have the "right" to remain there. "I think that the principle that Jews have the right to live on the West Bank to the Israelis is an important principle and I agree," said Shultz.

Shultz was responding to a question concerning a statement by the State Department after the United States vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution that called for the international community not to provide Israel any assistance that could be used for settlements. A Department spokesman said after the veto that it would be "impractical" to dismantle the settlements now there.

In explaining the veto, the U.S. Ambassador, Charles Lichenstein, said it would be neither "practical or even appropriate to call for the dismantling of the existing settlements" as the Arab sponsored resolution urged.

Shultz maintained that the U.S. position was "perfectly consistent" with what President Reagan said in his September 1 peace initiative. "Insofar as the settlements on the West Bank are concerned, one could foresee them staying right where they are, but the residents of

those settlements would live under the legal jurisdiction of whatever legal jurisdiction resulted from the negotiations," he said.

"That is distinct from what happened in the Sinai," the Secretary said. In the Sinai, all Jewish settlements were dismantled as part of the Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement after Egypt refused to allow any of the settlements to remain in the area it would control. But as for new settlements, Shultz said the U.S. has "stressed consistently" that "the new settlements on the

West Bank are not constructive, they don't help us at all in our search for peace in that region."

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