

# National Conference On Soviet Jewry

## Soviet Jewry: The Legacy Of Andropov - Highlights Of 1984 Developments

(Continued from page 27)

dismissed from their jobs and forced to take menial jobs or risk criminal prosecution on charges of "parasitism." Other forms of harassment have included the expulsion of their children from colleges and universities, military conscription selectively applied as a punitive measure, defamatory and anti-Semitic attacks in the media, arbitrary arrests, and the confiscation of personal property, with little or no effective means of legal recourse.

To counter Western criticism of its emigration policies, Moscow claimed that "all the Jews who wanted to leave have already done so." With the formation of a public "Anti-Zionist Committee" in 1983, the Soviet Union created a convenient mouthpiece for promoting this fiction and defending official policies. The Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to use

the media to promote the claim that the process of family reunification had ended.

According to the Committee, Jews are no longer interested in emigrating, although available statistics indicate that more than 350,000 have begun the emigration process.

### Anti-Semitism

The tight policies aimed at Jewish emigration were accompanied by an escalation of efforts to isolate and intimidate Jewish activists. At the same time that it was becoming impossible to leave, it was also becoming virtually impossible to live as a Jew within the Soviet Union.

Scores of private Hebrew teachers were warned by the police and the KGM to stop teaching Hebrew or be severely punished, although the private teaching of other languages is permitted. In many cases the homes of teachers were systematically raided and Hebrew materials confiscated. Private seminars on Jewish history and culture were also repressed and forcibly dispersed. In general, the authorities seemed bent on pursuing policies aimed at the total obliteration of any vestiges of Jewish religious and cultural identity, and the forced assimilation of Soviet Jews.

The public Anti-Zionist Committee continued to spearhead a virulent anti-Semitic campaign in the Soviet media. This campaign, thinly disguised as anti-Zionism, featured scurrilous attacks on individual Jews, Judaism, the Jewish people and the State of Israel. In October, Committee Chairman David Dragunsky held a press conference to reiterate propagandist claims that Zionists and Nazis collaborated during World War II. He alluded to a "deal between the Zionists and Hitler" and, in a bizarre tounabout, blamed them for "launching the war and the policy of genocide." Ignoring the annihilation of six million Jews, and the arrests of known Zionists by the Nazis and by the Stalinist regime, Dragunsky charged that the motivation for the alleged conspiracy was the "removal of capital

belonging to the big Jewish bourgeoisie from Germany to Palestine."

Within a month, an hour-long documentary on Leningrad television equated refuseniks with anti-Soviet behavior, alleging they are coerced by "outsiders" to continue their emigration activities.

Several well-known Leningrad Jews, including Lev Shapiro, Yakov Gorodetsky, Isosif Radomyslsky, and Aba Taratuta, were publicly identified as "Zionists who are nurtured by gifts they receive from the West." Ignoring the fact that they, as well as others, were fired from their jobs after applying for exit visas to Israel, it was alleged that they "refuse to do productive work, preferring to do manual labor and live on gifts." The broadcast, aimed at dissuading Jews from seeking repatriation to Israel, concluded that life in Israel is terrible. It interspersed footage of demonstration by Jews and Arabs, and warned the Soviet people to "beware of the dangers of Zionism."

Other themes touted by the Anti-Zionist Committee and given widespread media coverage included the equation of Hebrew teachers and Jewish cultural activists with spies, criminals and traitors, the alleged role of Jewish capital in Western military industry, and the "Zionist" influence in the Western media.

(This report was prepared by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry.)

### U.S. Soviets To Discuss Mideast, Other Issues

WASHINGTON (WNS) — The State Department stressed that planned talks with the Soviet Union are part of the "normal" dialogue between the United States and the USSR.

State Department Deputy spokesman Alan Romberg made this assertion as he confirmed that the two countries had an "agreement in principle" to discuss the Mideast. Although he had refused to confirm this agreement he said it had been reached by diplomats from the two countries before last week's talks at Geneva on nuclear arms control.

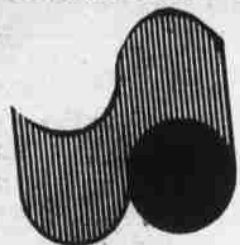
Romberg said the agreement to discuss the Mideast was only mentioned "in passing" during the recent talks between Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko.

He said there still is no "date, venue nor agenda" for the talks which are expected to be private diplomatic discussions between Mideast experts from the two countries. There was some indication that Richard Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, might represent the U.S. in the talks.

The agreement does not represent any change in U.S. Mideast policy, Romberg said. He said the U.S. still opposes the Soviet proposal for an international conference to

discuss Mideast issues. Earlier this week, State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb said the U.S. believes such an international conference would not be a "constructive approach" and the "only realistic path to peace is direct negotiations among the parties directly concerned based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338."

Romberg stressed that no other parties would be involved in the talks and that there would not be negotiations nor attempts to reach agreements.



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