

“The Knife Has Been Drawn”

Recently, 41-year-old Dr. Vladimir Brodsky of Moscow was sentenced to three years for “malicious hooliganism.” He has been seeking emigration to Israel for six years. Before his arrest, he wrote an account of his experiences, obtained by the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry. Excerpts follow --

My name is Brodsky. I am an anesthesiologist by profession. Our family suffered a lot under the Bolsheviks and Nazis. Many members also died under Stalin. Our family contained many physicians, and the “Doctors’ Plot” did not pass them by. My uncle survived the labor camps, but my aunt died after being charged with inoculating patients with cancer.

I encountered anti-Semitism for the first time in high school. My classmates used to beat me up. When they called me “shid” -- “kike” -- some switch would turn. I stopped thinking what I was doing and fought, no matter what the odds.

When the Six-Day War began, the Jewish students at my university came together. We weren’t thinking of leaving, but because we were all Jewish and felt the oppression. The Israeli victory united us. We met for no more than a month. I was then hospitalized, and this saved me. All the other men at the meetings were removed from the institute into the army. They announced at a Komsomol meeting that “a Zionist groups had been discovered.”

In 1979, I began attending unofficial Jewish seminars. During the 1980 Olympics, two friends and I declared a hunger strike, protesting the refusal to let us leave for Israel. Seven KGB men sat at the entrance to our house. Hardly anyone wishing to see us were allowed through. Yet we were proud since we were fighting for our rights.

I participated in a demonstration on Prisoners for Zion Day, December 24th. “Demonstration” is really too loud of a word. We didn’t march, should or hold up placards -- we couldn’t afford

to. We simply stood at the Lenin Library, looking at the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet with mute reproach. However, this was sufficient to have me arrested on charges of hooliganism, using obscene language and refusing to listen to police officers.

In 1982, a patient, already dying, was brought to my hospital, and passed away as I treated her. A general meeting of all the doctors was called under the chairmanship of a professor, a Jew, who said I was responsible for the death. The medical records were immediately sent to the prosecutor. I was dismissed from work and was unemployed for a long time.

My apartment was set on fire. Neighbors saw a man pouring a liquid under my door and the fire started. When I came home I saw four or five familiar KGB men across the street. They stood there, leaning against their car, smiling. This happened after I spoke to someone in Israel by phone and said persecutions against those who taught the Torah had begun.

I was under round-the-clock surveillance, then beaten up in the entrance hall of my house. Summons to the KGB and prosecutor continued. Neighbors informed the police who had come to visit us. Many of my friends went to prison during this period.

In August 1984, I completed a difficult 24-hour shift at work, and went into the hospital yard. Four KGB men seized me. One began beating me while the others stood around us, all in the presence of patients and doctors. Some tried to intervene, but the men kept them away. I was thrown into a car and brought to a police station, then to court. The judge asked if I understood why I was being tried. I replied that I was proud of being put on trial because of my desire to go to my homeland, Israel.

The KGB has started planting “drugs” and “weapons.” Despite all the intimidation tactics,

Soviet Jews have not given up our intention to go to Eretz Israel.

Brother Jews! I’ve always been interested in Jewish history, particularly that of modern German Jews. It still has not been decided whether everything was done to save them. History repeats itself. Perhaps it will happen here tomorrow, or the day after. G-d forbid! The knife has been drawn.

Let each of you think if you have done everything possible to save Soviet Jews. Think about it now; tomorrow might be too late.

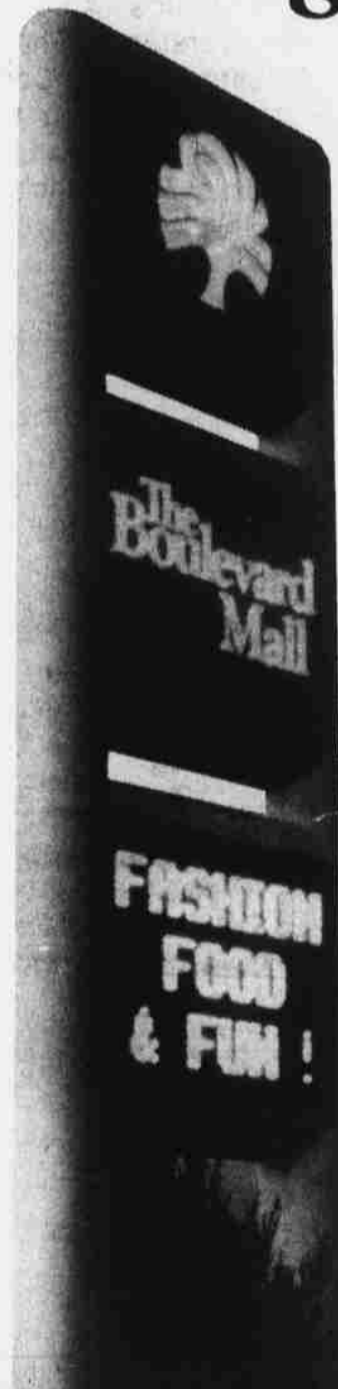
I’m often asked by American Jews, “How can we help you?” If Jews in prison find their lives there easier to bear, if Dr. Joseph Begun and Anatoly Sharansky stop being persecuted in the labor camps, if the authorities stop sending us to prison, your assistance is effective. If emigration is resumed, this will be the most important indicator of your assistance.

Dr. Brodsky was married only three months when he was sentenced. The SSSJ urges letters of support to his wife Dina Zisserman-Brodsky, Ulitsa Aroshina 38/2, apt. 343, Moscow, USSR.

FTA Accord Approved By Cabinet

JERUSALEM (WNS) — The Cabinet approved an agreement with the United States to gradually lift all trade restrictions between the two countries over the next 10 years, a Cabinet statement said. The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is the first of its kind between the U.S. and another country. It is expected to increase Israeli exports to the U.S. by \$200 million in the next two years, according to Industry Ministry officials. The FTA was signed in April by Industry Minister Ariel Sharon and U.S. Trade Representative William Brock. President Reagan said at the time that the agreement underscored the closeness of the U.S. and Israel and America’s commitment to Israel’s security and prosperity.

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to our
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