

Congress Expresses Concern About Human Rights In The USSR

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The 100th Congress, in its first session, has made overwhelmingly clear that it wants an improvement of human rights in the Soviet Union, particularly the

right to emigrate for Jews and others, as a condition for improvement of bilateral U.S.-Soviet relations.

A resolution strongly stating Congress' concern in these matters

was adopted by a vote of 99-0 in the Senate last week with the House concurring. The bipartisan resolution was introduced by Sens. Robert Byrd (D. W.Va.) and Robert Dole (R. Kan.), the Majority and Minority leaders, respectively.

It calls for the immediate release of all Soviet Prisoners of Conscience and permission for all refuseniks and others who so wish, to emigrate. "The Senate action clearly indicates the overwhelming support of Congress and the American people for the just cause of Soviet Jewry," Morris Abram, chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, said in a statement after the vote.

The resolution called "deceptive" the new Soviet regulations codifying emigration procedures, noting that

they "do not permit emigration for religious, national or political reasons" and in fact "codify the previous pretexts for denying emigration permits even in cases involving the reunification of immediate families."

The resolution also noted that nearly 400,000 Soviet Jews have applied for emigration "at considerable personal risk" but during 1986 fewer than 1,000 Jews have been

allowed to emigrate. The resolution "declares that the Soviet Union's continued human rights abuses, especially its refusal to permit all those who wish to emigrate to do so, seriously affect the atmosphere for productive negotiations on other aspects of bilateral relations (between the U.S. and USSR) and make more difficult the reaching of viable agreements with the Soviet Union."

Samaritan Community Leader Dead At 87

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Yaacov Ben Uzi

HaCohen, the High Priest of the Samaritan community was buried on Mt. Gerizim in Nablus recently. He died at the age of 87. Almost the entire Samaritan community of 528 attended the funeral along with HaCohen's many Jewish and Arab friends.

He served as High Priest since 1984. His fluency in Arabic, English and Hebrew had made him the principal spokesman for the community before becoming High Priest. He was the author of several books and supported himself as a palm reader.



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