

"I Do Not Consider Myself Guilty"

(Worldwide pressure on the Kremlin paid off when Prisoner of Conscience Dr. Joseph Begun stepped off a train in Moscow to the cheers and embraces of his friends in February. He had served four years of a 12-year sentence for his role as a leading unofficial Jewish educator, according to the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry. On the day of his return, he spoke by phone to friends in Israel --)

The story of my release really began in mid-January when an investigator arrived from the procurator's office at Chistopol Prison and began speaking about Article 70 (the "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" used against Begun and some other political prisoners.) Three or four days later everybody charged under that Article in Chistopol was released, except me. I was told my "refusal to write" an appeal for pardon was the reason.

Finally, I wrote a statement saying that I don't intend to violate Soviet Laws if there will be no need to violate them, meaning if the Jews have their right to cultural and national development. I also wrote that I have never been guilty of committing a crime, that I have never violated Soviet Laws and therefore do not consider myself guilty. Thus, I do not intend to appeal for pardon.

I think the government's declared changes will become real only if true equality is introduced, which for Jews means they can enjoy their

national culture. I presented a five-point program in my statement. I said emigration to Israel should be considered in the general context of emigration from the USSR. The new emigration law has stringent restrictions which will become an insurmountable obstacle for many people. Every Jew wishing to live in Israel should be allowed his right. There was also a point on the restoration of Jewish national education. Literature for this should be published in Russian and teaching aids for Hebrew study should also be made available. This I presented as a necessary minimum. No democracy can be possible without it.

I did not place special emphasis on religion in my statement because it is a right not restricted by law. There was also a paragraph on contacts with Jewish communities in other countries, in particular, with Israel and Rumania.

The authorities demanded I promise not to engage in any illegal activities. I have no intention of doing anything illegal. It is rather a question of whether my rights will be violated.

It's hard to determine what forced them to release me, but I think it was the intensive demonstrations of support which played the decisive role, though many people here paid for them by deprivations and much suffering. We witnessed some courageous acts by Jews who spoke out here in defense of their rights and that of the prisoners.

(The SSSJ urges letter of support to Dr. Joseph Begun at: Raketny Bulvar 11/1, apt. 15, Moscow, USSR; and demands for the Begun family's immediate release to Israel to General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev at: Kremlin, Moscow, USSR. Airmail is 44¢/1/2 oz.)

Israel's Minister Of Education And The B'nai B'rith Women Mission To Israel Celebrate Children's Home Groundbreaking



B'nai B'rith Women International President Irma Gertler talking to one of the boys at the BBW Children's Home in Jerusalem. Ms. Gertler and participants in BBW's Mission to Israel took part in a groundbreaking ceremony for a new cottage at the Home. The internationally recognized residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed boys is the only facility of its kind in Israel.

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Not that anyone is counting, but the Hebrew University of Jerusalem ranked eighth among 1,500 institutions worldwide whose faculty has contributed articles most frequently to the Journal of Finance from 1976-85. The figure was announced by the journal, a publication of the American Finance Association. Leading Hebrew U. scholars and third among 1,800 authors for articles published in the journal from 1946-85 was Haim Levy of the business administration faculty.

Two Jewish Perspectives On Surrogate Motherhood

(Continued from page 3)

that surrogate mother Jane Whitehead did not have full knowledge of the consequences of her action, hence relieving her of her obligation to fulfill the contract. He points out that she previously had given birth to her own children.

Siegel also stresses that Jewish law is "pro-natal." For example, the priests in ancient times offered blessings and prayers on behalf of infertile women.

The rabbi believes that surrogate mothers are another alternative for "people to have children. When nature plays a trick (infertility), in my opinion it's a great blessing to use whatever we can to let these people enjoy parenthood."

Looking at surrogate motherhood as an ethical issue and in the context of the pain of an infertile couple, Siegel adds that it's important "to think

about these questions with your heart as well as your head."

On the issue of embryo transfers -- transferring a fertilized ovum of a husband and wife to a surrogate mother for the nine months of pregnancy -- Tendler and Gellman both see major ethical problems. The surrogate mother in this case is an "incubator mother," says Tendler.

Tendler wonders who is to be considered the mother in such a case, the woman who contributes "the little bit of DNA" or the woman who provides the "gestational location" and supports, with the attendant risks of pregnancy, the existence of the baby?

"We have often had children born with doubtful fathers," he said. "Never before have we had doubtful mothers."

(Marian Edelman Borden is a freelance writer living in Larchmont, N. Y.)

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