

Arizona Lawmakers Join Protest Of ABA Accord With Soviet Lawyers

PHOENIX, Ariz. (JTA) — Two Arizona lawmakers have joined the ongoing battle against a 1985 agreement between the American Bar Association (ABA) and the Association of Soviet Lawyers (ASL).

Pauline Yearwood of the Greater Phoenix Jewish News reported that Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D.) and Rep. Jon Kyl (R.) said they opposed the agreement because it symbolized acceptance of Soviet human rights violations.

"I am deeply concerned about the many facts reflecting a lack of respect of human rights, and strong proof of an anti-Semitic philosophy among the ASL leadership," DeConcini said.

ASL has been involved most notably in the publication of anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist writings together with the Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Public.

Kyl said that as a 20-year member of the ABA he was "ashamed that the ABA would be

involved in a thing like this." He said he was developing a strategy aimed at convincing the ABA to abrogate the agreement during its annual summer meeting.

He also is planning to bring up the matter before the House of Representatives and said he is trying to convince members of Congress to sign a letter asking for an end to the agreement.

These statements followed a barrage of criticism aimed at statements made by ABA president Eugene Thomas of Boise, Idaho, during the ABA's mid-year meeting in New Orleans in

February. He was reported to have said that members of the Task Force on ABA-Soviet Relations who were protesting the lawyers' agreement "are scarred by the Holocaust" and focused on "family concerns" while ABA is involved in "larger issues."

Patience Huntwork, who led the demonstrators along with fellow Phoenix attorney Orest Jejna, denounced Thomas' reported statement as "neither factually accurate nor pertinent to the issue of the ABA's ties to the Soviets."

"Furthermore, it was inappropriate and insensitive -- It is a sad state of affairs when the President of the

American Bar Association does not appear to understand the full implications of the Holocaust."

Thomas indicated to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that his remarks were taken out of context. A transcript his office provided

showed the remarks were contained in his reply to a question at a press conference, "Why is there this apparent difference in the agenda of the picketers and the agenda of the ABA?"

Thomas reportedly said: "Well, it's dif-

ferent in the sense that these are people who were deeply scarred by the Holocaust, as I think all of us are in varying degrees. The Holocaust was not limited to Jewish people and the horror is not limited to any par-

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