

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION WHERE WE STAND

GOOD SIGNS: 1. Soviet officials promised the delegation of 9 American Rabbis who recently toured Russia (July 1965) that a prayer book would soon be printed and that

Yeshiva students would again be permitted to travel to Moscow for study, and that other religious needs such as tefillim and matzoh would soon be provided. These promises are very important and represent an official Soviet acknowledgement of some of the deprivations visited upon Soviet Jews. How-

ever, note that these concessions pertain only to religious deprivations, omitting severe and ominous aspects of Soviet anti-semitism (such as defamation and vilification of Jews in the off ial press.) 2. Premier Kosygin denounced anti-semitism on July 19 in a speech at Riga, calling it "alien" and a "contradiction to our Communist world outlook" Shortly after, a Pravda editorial, reprinted throughout the Soviet Union,

emphasized the fact that anti-semitism gives Russia a bad reputation among the nations. Comment: The anti-Jewish campaign in the Soviet press and periodicals have led to many protests which have clearly had an effect. Soviet leaders are now considering whether the advantages of the use of Jewish scapegoats counterbalances the disadvantages in terms of "a bad reputation" with

the uncommitted nations as well as within the Communist bloc. 3. The past year has seen criticisms of the "economic crimes trials" by several prominent Soviet Jurists. These critiques have been translated and described in an article by M. Decter (Midstream, March 1965). Comment:

It seems that the Soviet leaders may be preparing a strategic retreat from their use of the notorious "economic crimes trials" that have singled out the Jews as enemies of Soviet society. Possibly the responsibility for the conduct of these trials will be shifted to so-called "irresponsible prosec-utors and journalists". Whether the economic crimes trials will now be abandoned as government policy may well depend on further pressure created by the world spotlight.

 In the past eighteen months, Jewish tourists to the USSR have received red carpet treatment. Special efforts have been made to counter stories of official anti-semitism. In preparation for this new propaganda effort, the Soviet public has been barraged with articles denouncing the "despicable citizen" who betrays his country by criticizing it to foreigners who betrays his country by criticizing it to foreigners. 5. Next year the city of Kiev will erect a monument at Babi Yar in memory of

- the scores of thousands whom the Nazis tragically slaughtered in this ravine. Three years ago Khruschev silenced the Shostakovich 13th Symphony which had a Babi Yar movement. On September 20th of this year it was played in Moscow where it received a tremendous ovation. 6. Tens of thousands of Moscow Jews participated in Simchas Torah services this year. Young and old, danced for hours in light snow before the Moscow
- (Continued on page 3)
- Current Developments (Con't from page 1)

Just as we become accustomed to continuing pain and learn to live with it, so we become accustomed to the

repressions and brutality that typify Jewish life in many parts of the world. We become anesthetized and no longer react as morally responsible human beings. In our lifetimes we have witnessed two of the greatest threats to Jewish survival in all history; one occurred

twenty-five years ago in Nazi Germany and the other is with us today in Soviet Russia. The Nazis were permitted to murder six million Jews with frighteningly little world reaction. Will a similar lack of response permit the Soviet government to complete its policy of social and spiritual genocide of its three million Jewish citizens? The answer is in large measure in our hands - yours and mine. This time we know, therefore we must speak and we must act. The purpose of this newsletter is

to clarify the issues and reawaken concern. Such concern can grow only through exposure and public information. A well directed spotlight can thus combat persecution, for it is diffi-

cult to perpetrate injustice in the full glare of public view. THE SPOTLIGHT will attempt to make available and interpret the facts to members of the Council on Soviet Anti-Semitism and to other concerned people. Responsible action must be supported by facts and information. THE SPOTLIGHT will present periodically: 1. Current developments in the Soviet Union that bear on the Jewish problem there. 2. World reactions and protests

regarding Soviet Jewish policies.

3. Reviews of pertinent books, articles and reports. Readers' reactions will be welcomed and representative letters will be

printed or summarized as space allows.

World public opinion, however, has not reacted favorably to the purges, and the scapegoating of Jews has also begun to hurt the Soviet image. These considerations are important to the Kremlin, and it has responded with promised concessions that may improve the lot of Soviet Jewry. While the concessions are superficial, and perhaps constitute "window dressing," they provide hope that the Kremlin is not totally inflexible and may take public opinion into

of young people outside the synagogue tonight seemed to confirm reports that a feeling of Jewish identity persisted in the younger generation." BAD SIGNS: Anti-semitic articles have continued to appear in the Soviet

Synagogue. To quote Peter Grose, N.Y. Times correspondent

"The presence of young people at a religious festival -

whether they came for worship or merriment - is noteworthy in the Soviet Union, where all religious belief is discouraged among loyal Communists . . . The high proportion

press, two of which are described below: "The Shadow of the Synagogue" appeared in Zviazda, the leading Byelorussian language daily in Minsk, a city of over 500,000 with 30,000 Jews. Professor Muraviev, the author of the article, describes Judaism

as preaching a "national exclusivity" which seeks "mastery over all mankind" and instills distrust and contempt for other nationalities of the USSR. (Note the similarity to the Protocols of Zion.) The "heart" of Judaism is described as Israel and the United States where the Zionist bourgeoisie exploits Judaism for counter revolutionary purposes. "Judaism defends what is dead and rotten . . . The Synagogue is the evil ugly shadow of the past . . . Judaism preaches anti-Communist morality." Comment: It is easy to estimate the impact of such writing in Byelorussia where popular anti-semitism has a frightful history and is still endemic. We may imagine the fear such an official pronouncement must be creating in the Jewish community of Minsk. In July, 1965, Pravda carried an unprecedented story which was in effect a manhunt for 3 "profiteers" who

stereotyped terms. The article carried pictures of the "wanted criminals" and anti-semitic innuendoes. Comment: Soviet experts tell us that not even the most extreme criminals are sought in this manner in the pages of Pravda, and that such publication of pictures of wanted persons is virtually unheard of. Calling on the public at large to be "on the lookout" for Jewish swindlers appears calculated to inflame popular anti-

allegedly embezzled money from a knit goods factory.

All three were clearly Jewish, and so described in

TO SUM UP . . . Totalitarian governments must find someone to blame for their economic and other difficulties. In the past, Soviet Russia has followed this rule in recurrent purges of its leadership and in its constant use of Jewish scapegoats.

Economic Crimes in the Soviet Union. A staff study by

semitic feelings.

Please send me the items checked below:

Jews in the Soviet Union. By Lewis S. Feuer

A Newsletter on Anti-Jewish Policies of the Soviet Union

the International Commission of Jurists. 50¢ The State of Soviet Jewry. By M. Friedberg 10¢ Soviet Anti-Semitism: An Exchange. Between Bertrand Russel and Aron Vergelis. 5¢ ☐ The Soviet Book That Shook the Communist World 15¢

☐ The Lvov Case - A Self-Portrait of Soviet Anti-Semitism

its attack on economic and agricultural difficulties through what have been termed "capitalistic methods." In October, the party officially adopted a system of economic planning based on market considerations such as "profits" and con-sumer demand. If this new system is successful, it may reduce economic pressures and resultant black markets and bribery networks. Soviet Jews, having been unfairly blamed and prosecuted for these failures, will be praying for the success of the new methods. However, this new system requires the re-making of much of the Soviet managerial system, with untold new demands for initiative and flexibility placed even on lower-level managers. The fact that the

Another hopeful sign of the Kremlin's responsiveness is

account.

Soviet government is willing to undertake such drastic reform, however, provides the hopeful note. On the other hand, pressures from neo-Stalinist groups and the frustration of de-bugging a new system will provide strong temptation to return to the use of scapegoats. The only effective deterrent may continue to be an alert world public opinion that vocally despises the exploitation of minority groups. The Cry of the Oppressed In January of this year, Congregation Zichron Ephraim, a synagogue facing the Soviet Mission in New York City, erected a plaque on the wall facing the Mission. It reads: "Hear The Cry Of The Oppressed - The Jewish Community Of The Soviet Union." Attending the unveiling of the plaque were Mayor Wagner, Senators Javits and Kennedy and Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson. The Soviet Mission lodged a protest with the U.S.

one of the national Jewish organizations will soon coordinate such a project, setting a date around which planning and publicity may be developed. You can help bring about this significant protest by calling this matter to the attention of your rabbis and lay Jewish leaders. Dr. David Gitlin is initiating a pilot project

government. The protest was repeated in April, at which

time the plaque and its attending ceremonies were character-ized as "slanderous" and an anti-Soviet demonstration.

fraternal organizations can express solidarity with our

suffering brethern in the Soviet Union by erecting similar

plaques. In addition, such actions would serve to direct

attention of the community to the problem. It is hoped that

American Jewish congregations, community centers, and

in Cleveland and will be happy to offer any assistance possible. His address is 289 Pineview, Berea, Ohio 44017; phone 475-1898, Area Code 216. CLEVELAND COUNCIL ON SOVIET ANTI-SEMITISM . 14308 Triskett Road . Cleveland, Ohio 44111 Handbook for Community Action on Soviet Anti-Semitism An Appeal: To the Leaders of the Soviet People. An example of a community action program. 15¢

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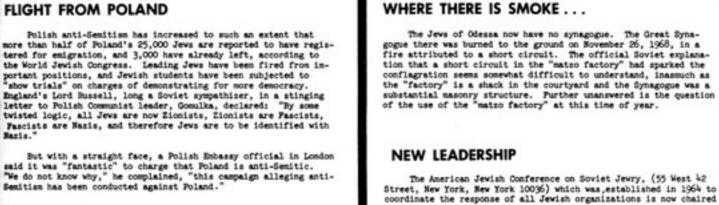
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THE **MARCH, 1969** SPOTLIGHT

"show trials" on charges of demonstrating for more democracy.

England's Lord Russell, long a Soviet sympathizer, in a stinging letter to Polish Communist leader, Gomulka, declared: "By some twisted logic, all Jews are now Zionists, Zionists are Fascists, Fascists are Nazis, and therefore Jews are to be identified with But with a straight face, a Polish Embassy official in London said it was "fantastic" to charge that Poland is anti-Semitic. "We do not know why," he complained, "this campaign alleging anti-Semitism has been conducted against Poland."



No. 7

The American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, (55 West 42

INSULT UPON INJURY

FLIGHT FROM POLAND

From a correspondent's report, Economist, London: Although the Polish authorities can hardly have any obje tions to the Jewish exodos they are making it as unpleasant and difficult as possible. Before a Jew can obtain emigration papers he has to renounce his Polish nationality at police headquarters. The fee is 5,000 rlotys (about two months' pay on average) and the procedure is said to be distressing and humiliating. The would-be emigrant must produce a certificate issued by his local authority, stating that he has left his flat or house in "perfect condition." Before issuing the certificate the local au-thority inspects the premises and usually insists that they be re-decorated at the occupant's expense.

The emigrant must also produce various other certificates -- to show he is not leaving any unpaid debts, that he has been struck off the register of his doctor; his dentist, his library and so on.

He has no legal possibility, either immediately or later, of transferring any savings or other financial resources abroad, and there is a strict limit—in some cases apparently amounting almost to a total prohibition—on the amount of household goods and other material possessions he can take might him. material possessions he can take with him. NIXON'S STAND ON SOVIET JEWRY "I have long been aware of the plight of Soviet Jewry and, as you well know, I have expressed my deep concern on many occasions. Jews in the Soviet Union, even more than other religions and min-ority groups, are subject to special disabilities. They are den-

ied the free development of their educational and cultural institutions; they cannot train religious leaders; they have no associ-ation of synagogues or communities which can establish relationships with their co-religionists in the Soviet Union or other countries."

"I am deeply concerned by the resurgence of the Soviec anti-Jewish propaganda campaign, thinly disguised as anti-Zionism--a campaign which is mirrored in Communist countries in Eastern Bur-ome." ope MI deplore the discriminatory measures imposed upon the Jews in the Soviet Union, and I hope and trust that humanitarians throughout the world will continue vigorously to protest these re-strictions and deprivations of human rights."

- Richard M. Nixon as quoted recently in the New York Times;

and he questions whether "any tolerable future at all is left for Jews...in the communist countries of Bastern Burope." Prof. Bubin also anticipates that the Soviets will continue to use anti-Semitism

in the battle against liberalisation, and in response to "a mixed bag of fears." He urges those supporting the idea of detente with Russia to remember that the plight of Jews should not be omitted from such considerations. Compared with the other panelists, Dr. Schechtman appears more optimistic about the immediate future of Soviet Jews. He writes that the Soviet Union may already have accomplished its purposes in suppressing liberals and intellectuals and that further represeion of Jews would thus be unproductive for them. He also states that the stubborn retention of identity by

futility of efforts to eradicate Judaism.

Sowiet Jewish youth has deeply impressed the Kremlin with the

The events in Czechoslovakia are bound to have manyfold re-percussions the world over, and in the Soviet Union itself. But I do not think that they are likely to affect specifically and im-

mediately the plight of the Jewish and other minority groups. The

legal, administrative and cultural subjugation of those groups has

by now reached a point of saturation beyond which the Soviet reg-ime has no incentive to go. The situation as it is at present is

What causes intense headaches to the Moscow bosses is a phen-

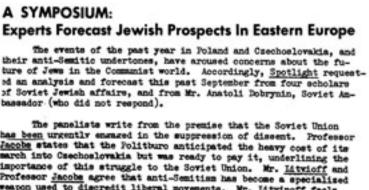
All thoughtful observers of the Soviet Jewish scene are unaninous in stressing that young Jews, no matter how acculturated, strangely affirm their spiritual fervishmess and are struggling to

omenon, which no measure of discrimination, or even persecution, is capable of extinguishing: the almost elemental rise of quiet, assertive national consciousness among even the most assimilated younger generation of Soviet Jewry. They are culturally Russianized, but not Russified.

hold the reins will at least feed the horses.

by Lewis H. Weimstein of Boston. The coordinator is Abraham J.
Bayer. However, the organization still has no regular budget or
funding, and may thus continue as a 2-horse shay (formerly pulled
by Rabbi Israel Miller and Mr. Al Chernin). It is hoped that those





pon is being crudely encouraged by the Soviet Union in Poland,

fully satisfactory to the regime. A stiffening of attitude to-wards the country's intellectuals and protesters in their totality is, of course, unavoidable. But there are no reasons for the Soviet establishment to single out for particular harshness Jewish, Armenian or Ukrainian intellectuals. Politically-and this is of major interest to the Soviet regime--they are rather more than less meek and subdued than the intelligentsia of the great Russian

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find some--often quixotic--forms of self-expression. Sowiet poli-cies have raised Jewishness to the status of "forbidden fruit," which only heightens the appetite of the youth. Even the all-powerful Soviet repressive machine can do little to eradicate the growing national consciousness, deeply rooted as it is, in the hearts and minds of the tens of thousands of youngsters who are gathering around (not in) the symagogue during the High Holidays, singing, "Israel Lives." The authorities can forbid such manifestations; but they know themselves that this kind of repression would strengthen rather than extinguish the youths' innermost allegiance to the Jewish people. Tacitly acknowledging the intensity of such feelings, Moscow prefers to let the youngsters "let off the steam"--as long as the singing and shouting bears no distinctive political character. They have too many more pressing troubles to attend to. There is no guarantee that today's relative permissiveness will last. It can be abruptly reversed any day. But should it happen, the reason behind will be of some internal nature, not necessarily connected with the "Czechoslowak complex."

All those truly concerned with the future of Soviet Jewry must take note of the new encouraging trend in the younger genera

tion: the firm determination to remain Jews, the rediscovery of Jewish allegiance by uncounted multitudes of Russianized youths who refuse to become integrally Russified, to shed all vestiges of their Jewishness. They want to be Jews.

.......

Joseph B. Schechtman

JOSEPH SCHECHTMAN, a foremost authority on Jewish population movements and is the author of important books and articles on Soviet Jewry, among them Star in Eclipse: Russian Jewry Revisited, 1961 and Zionism and Zionists in Soviet Russia: Greatness and Drama, 1966. . . EMANUEL LITVINOFF, author and editor of the definitive quarterly, Jews in Eastern Europe. . . DANIEL JACOBS, noted scholar and Sovietologist, professor of Soviet government at the University of California at Berkely, is the author of numerous articles and reviews. . . RONALD RUBIN, assistant professor of social science at Manhattan Community College of the City University of New York, is the author of a book on Soviet Jewish policy, The Unredeemed, Quadrangle Books, 1968 and numerous articles on Soviet Jewry. The obvious lesson, of course, in light of the Soviet Union's trampling of Czechoelovskia is that Moscow's appetite will not be appeased merely because well-intentioned Americans hope it so.
Taken in connection with Soviet bellicosity elsewhere--instigating

revanchist Arabs, financing Ho Chi Minh's imperialism-the Czech episode dramatizes the shaky foundations of detente.

As for the Jew, the Soviet invasion confirms a new twist in the politicization of Communist anti-Semitism. Previously, Soviet Jew-baiting served a mixed bag of fears--the fear of the "international Jewish conspiracy," a fear common to totalizarians on the right and left; the fear of the synagogue, kosher slaughter, mats-oth, etc., as comprising a horus pocus in an officially material-istic country; the fear of a Jewish individualism still not suppressed by Communist collectivism: the fear that the U.S.S.R.'s

pressed by Communist collectivism; the fear that the U.S.S.R.'s most Westernized minority fraternizes too closely with foreigners.

Hence, Izvestia's crude attack on Jews in the satellite na-

tions, such as Jiri Hajek, former Czech Foreign Minister, as "an-other Jewish counter-revolutionary" and Nazi collaborator. Use of the Jew in attacking liberalization will naturally differ qualita-

tively among the East European nations but the precedent is there and this technique will continue to be available in future crises.

with Jewish integrity and survival. Firstly, Jews might rethink their nearly unstinting support of the foreign policy of political

American Jews should continue to seek a lessening of Cold War neeracan vews snowid continue to seek a lessening of Gold Mar-tensions, but a detente overlooking the plight of Soviet Jews (one-fourth of the world's Jews) is no detente. Apart from parochial Jewish interests, U.S. policy makers must realize that the growing global interdependence of all men sharpens commitment toward So-

Once the existence of the new Soviet policy is demonstrated, one may turn his attention to the implications for those concerned

This is not discounting Arab admiration for Jewish oppression although, in fairness, this represents a dividend of, rather than rationale for, Soviet anti-Semitism. Arab militants have no political choice but to go along with the Kremlin for no other major power dares toy with Arab dreams for the "showdown" with Israel. But in fighting democratizing forces now ruffling the Iron Curtain, hard-liners devised the "foreign devil" line--which blazes imperialists rather than freedom-starved citizens for the unrest. What better "foreign devil" than the Jews (read: "Zionists")? Once victimized mainly for donatic fears, the Jew today has become an internationalized scapegoat, an instrument of ancien regime Communist foreign policy, a Cold War tool.

regime Communist foreign policy, a Cold War tool.

Secondly, the U.S. Jewish community should prepare itself for persevering attention to this issue as it will be a problem for some time. We must develop resources in terms of public awareness, political support and a more targeted orchestration of our pro-tests. The cause of Soviet Jewry will need some of the seething commitment and clamour that marks protests for other issues in this militant day. Ronald I. Rubin

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viet Jewry's well-being.

NEW SLIDE SHOW AVAILABLE 'The Jevish Community in the Soviet Union" is the title of a new slide show produced by the CCSA. Consisting of 25 color slides (2"x2", standard size) and script, the slide show reports on the darkness and bitterness of Jewish life in the Soviet Union and the spark of resistance that still burns. This informative 35 minute presentation is recommended for adult and high school audiences. A complete slide show with script may be purchased for \$8.00 from the CCSA, 14306 Triskett Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44111.

> The Chief Rabbi remained steadfast and continued with his But every time he spoke about equal rights of Jews, there

was another outburst from the crowd. In fact, the auditorium was so full of mounful protest and discussion, the rabbi could hardly be heard. Finally, he told the Americans to come to Russia to see

Rabbi Levin at last finished his speech in Yiddish amidst the calls and pleas being tossed around in the noisy building. The interpreter could not interpret the end of the speech into English

I will never forget the welcoming cheers that the audience showered on Rabbi Levin. Nor will I forget the shocked, beseeching calls and pleas ringing out to the rabbi as he denied Soviet

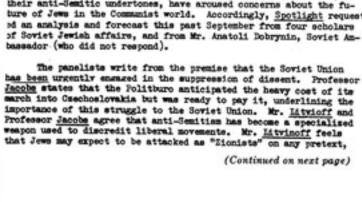
Several prominent rabbis have written that Rabbi Levin's vis-it opens a new era in "Soviet-Jewish friendship." They warn that the improving situation for Soviet Jewry could be worsened by cri-ticism of Soviet-Jewish policies at this time. Informed observers recognize, however, that Rabbi Levin's visit was itself only a re-

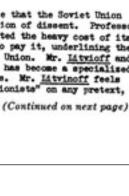
sponse to criticism, rather than a new approach or an effort on the part of the Soviet government to understand Jewish attitudes.

for themselves whether or not anti-Semitism exists there.

and the meeting was then abruptly called to an e

RABBI LEVIN'S VISIT: AN EDITORIAL





Enamuel Litvinoff

The implications of the Czechoslovakian crisis are deeply disturbing. There has been a perceptible hardening of Soviet "disci-pline" internally ever since the fall of Khrushchev. The process has certainly been accelerating over the last two years and now the Soviet leadership has served notice on the world that, as far as it is concerned, Communist society in Eastern Europe must be frozen at its current state of development. There is no reason to believe that the decision to invade Crechoslovakia represents anything less than a determination by the U.S.S.R. to pursue its great power interests regardless of the rights and the freedom of the smaller nations, nationalities and ethnic groups. It is the culmination of a growing process of cynicism that, since the Six Day War, has chosen to use the rusty weapon of anti-Semitism not against Jews alone, but against all those striving for greater freedom. Today we confront a situation in which use of this weafreedom.

East Cermany and, even more significantly, in its own press to discredit the forces for reform in Czechoslovakia. The consequences spelt out for Jews in the Soviet Union and elsewhere in Eastern Europe are extremely grave. Any Jev, on any pretext what-soever, can be attacked as a "Zionist" and subject to harsh persecution. This must undermine whatever sense of security has survived amongst Jews in Eastern Europe, and must invoke memories of the recent past when the "accident" of Jewish birth was alone suf-ficient to place am individual in jeopardy. Unless the situation undergoes radical improvement the time is fast approaching when we must ask ourselves if any tolerable future at all is left for Jews or those of Jewish descent, in the Communist countries of Eastern Europe.

One of the questions concerning the Soviet invasion of Czech-oslovakia that has occupied considerable press space is whether the U.S.S.R. took that step primarily out of concern that the Czechs were threatening the security of the Warsaw Pact structure or because of trepidation that the Czech liberalization virus would undermine "socialism" throughout the bloc, including the So-viet state itself. Interesting though the question may be, how-

ever, it is in most respects, beyond the point. For, having moved in Czechoslovakia, for whatever reason, having made the plunge and incurred the costs, there can be no doubt that the Soviets will

use the occasion to stifle the liberalization that they both sus-

slovakia are not a new departure but only a further push in the

In the Soviet Union there has been evidence of a move to the right for well over a year, particularly since Brezhnev's March 29, 1968, speech before the Conference of the Moscow Gorkom of the

The events beginning on that late August night in Czecho-

However, if the U.S.S.R. is going to have to pay, in abuse and disaffection abroad and in alienation at home, others are go-ing to suffer as well--especially the intellectuals and the Jews, whose causes are closely bound together. For both seek freedom and only as one succeeds will the other. The Soviet regime has already indicated whom it sees as the chief villains in the Czech "plot": men such as Hajek, Goldstuecker, Sik and Kriegel, all of whom are at least part Jewish in origin and, therefore, by Stalinist definition, part of the "Zionist" conspiracy. It can scarcely be said that, in so identifying liberalism and "Jewishness," the Soviets are borrowing a leaf from the book of the Polish Communists who earlier in 1968 made such accusations in their own country; for the Soviets have more than a few such pages in their own black book. Clearly they are pursuing the path, abroad and in the U.S.S.R., of indicating—and are probably more than somewhat convinced themselves—that liberalism is Jewish and in therefore, inco facto, alien and nefarious, and must Jewish and is therefore, ipso facto, alien and nefarious, and must Such a disposition on the part of the Soviet leadership does not speak well for the immediate future of the Jew in the Soviet Union. Difficult times are shead for him.

CONFRONTATION: MOSCOW RABBI vs UNBELIEVERS An Eyewitness Report by Peter Caron (Age 14) When I was in New York recently seeing my brother off to Europe, I was fortunate enough to attend the first address given to

an American audience by Chief Rabbi Yehuda Leib Levin of Moscov at

Hunter College on June 19. I didn't know at all what to expect, but the evening was so exciting and important that I would like to

last song, a prayer, made my eyes well with tears as I watched him rock back and forth, his voice moving rapidly through several registers. He sang in such a way that I was sure he was making up the song as he went along with his own feelings and emotions. The cantor received a tremendous ovation from the audience.

Next, the announcer introduced an official Soviet film on Jewish life in the U.S.S.R. Whenever Rabbi Levin appeared in the film, the audience clapped and cheered. They seemed to really like the rabbi. During the film, some of the crowd would laugh or call out "fake," such as when the yeshiva was shown.

Cantor David Stitskin of Leningrad, who began the night's activities, received an enthuniastic velcome from the crowd.

member of that night.

settled down in their seats. At that point, a small group of people just in front of me stood up and began singing "Hatikva," Israel's mational anthem. I beard someone behind me yell, "quiet, it's enough already!" But more and more people joined in until, like a great chorus, the en-tire audience of seventeen or eighteen hundred was singing in one

When the anthem was over, the rabbi spoke for ten minutes in Yiddish, followed by an English interpretation, then the rabbi again, and so forth. It went along smoothly enough in the begin-ning, as the rabbi spoke of peace and the need for good relations

Next, he talked about the Soviet Jews. He said that the Jews were better off now than they were under the Crars. (I realize that this is true, but it is nothing to brag about, for Jewish life was at an absolute low-point of misery under Crarism.)

When Rabbi Levin stated that there was no discrimination

against Jews in Russia, there was a loud response from the audi-ence. Some cried out, "Now can you say this, rabbit" Some emo-tional people--old men and women, young boys, and children--who may have had families in Russia, were too shocked to contain them-selves. They called out to the rabbi, beseeching him to tell the "real story." It was quite an experience for me to see these people pleading with Rabbi Levin.

SIMCHAT TORAH 5729 Moscow Jews celebrated Simchat Torah with singing and dancing

It seems clear that Rabbi Levin was not acting as an agent for Soviet Jews, since he never overtly acknowledged any of the disabilities suffered by Soviet Jews. In fact, visitors to the Soviet Union who have met the rabbi report that he inevitably defends Soviet Jewish policy. In all fairness to the rabbi, and with cognizance of his difficult position, he must still be viewed as a representative of the Soviet Union more truly than a representative

of Soviet Jews. We could hardly expect a reversal of his position at a time when he stood in a carefully planned international spot-The visit informs us that protest against Soviet-Jewish poli-cy has had some effect. If protest were discontinued, the Kremlin might feel no need to ameliorate the situation, even in the token fashion which has marked its response to date. UCYSJ For the past two years a New York state student movement, the Upstate Council of Youth for Soviet Jewry, has been gathering mo-mentum. The UCTSJ has provided guidance to youth groups and local mentum. The UCTSJ has provided guidance to youth groups and local communities and has sparked rallies, petition campaigns, teach-ins and dramatic presentations. And now the UCTSJ has prepared a well written and informative newsletter, Call to Action.

Residents of upstate New York who may wish to contact or sup-ort the UCYSJ, can do so at 115 Roosevelt Avenue, Syracuse, New

THE SPOTLIGHT

Editors: Dr. Herbert Caron, Rabbi Daniel Litt, Dr. Louis Rosenblum Layout and Staff: Mrs. Leonard Singer

between our two countries.

American Jews, in public demonstrations of solidarity with Soviet Jewish youth, sang, danced, and circulated petitions urging the U.S.S.R. to fulfill promises of individual dignity and liberty inherent in the Soviet constitution. **GRAVE QUESTIONS**

The air was crisp, and the enthusiasm tremendous. Yet despite the warmth of the participants, one thought kept nagging in my mind. As we danced in the Central Park Mall and as we marched around the Soviet UN Mission building, I couldn't help but notice the small number of participants. It is almost inconceivable that a city which is the hub of 3 million Jews could produce only 1500

"There are some who claim there wasn't sufficient notice giv-en, or that word about the event didn't reach all potential participants. But I cannot believe that 10 days' notice was not time enough to rally greater support for our brothers.

THE SPOTLIGHT

In this move to the right, the Politburo has been aware that there would be a price to pay in the march into Crechoslovakia, perhaps even a stiff price. But nevertheless, whether it acted in panic or in the calm of reason--there is evidence of both in the Czech case -- it has concluded that the price must be paid.

As a special service to our readers we have included in this issue a tear-out sheet containing a full size reproduction of a Protest Poster and a capsule Fact Sheet on Soviet Jewry. The pos-

ter, designed and produced by the CCSA, was used last year in a West Coast Passover project. The B:y Area Council on Boviet Jewry distributed posters through synagogues to thousands of homes in the Sam Francisco area. The posters, displayed on windows and doors, carried a message of protest and concern to the entire com-

We urge you to display this poster in your home during Pass-over and to encourage your symagogue, men's club, lodge, etc. to distribute Protest Posters to their membership in time for Pass-

Posters (printed on heavy paper) may be ordered in quantity at a cost of \$5.00 per hundred from the following:

- CCSA, 14306 Triskett Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44111 - Bay Area Council on S viet Jewry, 40 First Street, San Francisco, California 94105

munity.

share what I re

Finally, the rabbi himself was announced. As he came onto the stage, the audience went wild with clapping and cheering. Then someone started the chant, "An Yisroel Chai,"--the people of Like a spark in a hot, dry field, the chant spread from person to person until almost every voice was repeating the words over and over. This loud proclamation of Jewish existence contin-ued for four or five minutes until the crowd finally, happily,

(Continued on page 6)

despite a cold intermittent raim, and despite an atmosphere of growing hostility to Jews and to demonstrations of any sort. An estimated 12,000 people in and around the city's Central Synagogue, most of them young people, cheered lustily, danced the hora and sang Israeli songs.

Inside the white-columned symagogue itself, the overflow con-gregation, estimated at 2,000 sang "Havah Neramenu" ("Let us Re-joice") in Hebrew to thunderous hand-clapping.

--that was my estimate--for such an important event in the life of the Jewish people. In the U.S.S.R., the one holiday that young Jews turn out for is Simchat Torah, and this year, 12,000 danced at the Moscow Synagogue alone. Why couldn't we in New York show that we were massively with them? Why couldn't we let them know that while they are imprisoned, we, too, are not free; that while they lack religious freedom, we cannot pray without thoughts of

Reader reactions to the questions Mr. Pearce has posed will be printed in a forthcoming issue.

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This year Soviet Jews received moral support from Jews in 30 North American cities. Tens of thousands of young Canadian and As a footnote to Simchat Torah, 5729, we reprint from <u>Keeping</u>
<u>Posted</u>, Vol. XIV, No. 4, the following report by rabbinical student Stephen S. Pearce.

Is it possible that it's no longer fashionable to demonstrate against this particular cause--anti-Semitism? Are we to conclude that the great majority of American Jewish youth have forsaken So-

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