

“WHITHER HUMAN RIGHTS
IN RUSSIA?”

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 1999

**COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
WASHINGTON, DC.**

The Commission met at 10:00 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C., the Honorable Christopher H. Smith, Chairman, presiding.

Commission members present: Hon. Christopher H. Smith.

Witnesses present: Elena Bonner, Ludmilla Alexeyeva, Larry Uzzell, Micah Naftalin, David Satter, Mark Levin

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Mr. Smith. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of myself and the members of the Helsinki Commission, welcome to this hearing on the subject of the current human rights situation in Russia. The Commission was established by law in 1976 to monitor and encourage compliance with the provisions of the 1975 Helsinki Accords and subsequent OSCE documents.

Today when we discuss Russia, we need to be perfectly clear. Russia is not some dark dictatorship where citizens are jailed arbitrarily, press is muzzled, and elections rigged. Churches are not being burned down by mobs. In fact, the picture in Russia is undoubtedly better than in some of her former Soviet neighbors.

However, the decline in Russia's recent economic fortunes has been accompanied by disturbing developments in the area of human rights and civil liberties. A religion law developed in 1977 has led to legal difficulties for some religious organizations in their dealings with local authorities.

Indeed, in the relatively liberal environment of Moscow, the Jehovah's Witnesses are on trial for allegedly being a "destructive sect."

In St. Petersburg, the security services have enough time and resources to persecute Alexandr Nikitin, the environmental whistle-blower, but the cold-blooded killing of Duma deputy and democratic activist Galina Starovoitova has not been any closer to being solved than when the day that crime was committed.

Nikitin has been listed by Amnesty International as Russia's first political prisoner since the Soviet Union ceased to exist. anti-Semitism in Russia, thought to have been exiled since the Soviet period to the pages of rabidly nationalistic newspapers, has moved into the more comfortable seats of the Russian Duma. Last October at two public rallies, a Communist Party member of the Duma, Albert Makashov, blamed "the Yids" for Russia's current problems.

In a few minutes we'll play a brief tape of Mr. Makashov's performance. In December, at Duma hearings, the chairman of the Defense Committee blamed President Yeltsin's "Jewish entourage" for alleged "genocide against the Russian people."

In response to the public outcry, both in Russia and abroad, Communist Party chairman Zyuganov explained that the Party had nothing against "Jews", just "Zionism."

In the Russian Army soldiers are paid infrequently and recruits are physically mistreated on a wide-scale basis—even some of our news channels and news documentaries have documented the kind of abuse that these men endure.

This is the army upon which Russia relies to guard its nuclear facilities, something about which we all need to be concerned. This is yet another proof that human rights are not just an internal affair.

Russia has laws on the books but seems to work only when bureaucrats see legal justice in their own interest. The average citizen appears helpless before an arrogant bureaucracy, brutal crime, and economic chaos.

Today we are pleased to welcome witnesses with long experience in the struggle for human rights in Russia.

Dr. Elena Bonner, who will join us shortly, is chairperson of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation. She is one of the original members of the Moscow Helsinki Group and the widow of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Andrei Sakharov.

Since Sakharov's death in December 1989, Elena Bonner has continued the campaign for democracy and human rights in Russia. She joined the defenders of the Russian parliament during the attempted coup of August 1991 and lent her support to Yeltsin during the constitutional crisis of 1993. Dr. Bonner has written several books, including *Alone Together*, a description of her exile together with Dr. Sakharov in Gorky.

Ludmilla Alexeyeva is the chairperson of the Moscow Helsinki Group and president of the Internal Helsinki Federation. She is an historian and an original member of the Moscow Helsinki Group that was established in 1976 to monitor compliance with the 1975 Helsinki Accords.

She was exiled by the Soviet authorities to the United States in 1977, returned to Moscow in 1994, and is the author of *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious, and Human Rights*, and *The Thaw Generation*.

David Satter served from 1976 to 1982 as the Moscow correspondent of the Financial Times of London. In the 1980s he was the special correspondent on Soviet affairs for the *Wall Street Journal*. Mr. Satter is presently a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and a visiting scholar at the Johns Hopkins University Nitze School of Advanced International Studies.

He is the author of *Age of Delirium: The Decline and Fall of the Soviet Union* and is now working on a book about Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Lawrence Uzzell is the director-designate of the Keston Institute, founded by Canon Michael Bordeaux, and a respected source of information on religious life in Russia and the former Soviet Union.

He is currently the Moscow representative of the Keston Institute and was nominated last year for the Pulitzer Prize in journalism for his coverage of the Russian religion law. He is widely quoted in major media on religion in Russia and frequently advises diplomatic posts on the

religious situation in Russia. I have known Larry for more than 20 years and he has been a great advisor to this Commission and to me, personally.

Micah Naftalin is the National Director of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, an independent grassroots human rights organization that has worked tirelessly in partnership with indigenous activists on the ground in the former Soviet Union for nearly 30 years.

The UCSJ monitors anti-Semitism, neo-Fascism and violations of religious liberty and human rights. In 1990, Mr. Naftalin presided over the founding of the Russian-American Bureau on Human Rights, located in Moscow. It was the first Western human rights organization established in the Soviet Union.

And finally, Mark Levin has been Executive Director of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry since October 1992. He is one of the organized Jewish community's leading experts on national and international politics and legislative issues as well.

Over the years he has traveled extensively, representing the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews and the Soviet Jewry advocacy movement. In October 1992, Mr. Levin was the Scholar-in-Residence for the UJA Young Leadership Mission to Russia and Israel.

Let me mention this about Mark. My first human rights trip was in 1982 with Mark Levin when we traveled to the Soviet Union. It was in 1982. The 10-day/11-day trip was during my first term in Congress. At that time we met with Sharansky's mother, Dr. Lerner, and many other people, and for me it was my "baptism," if you will, in the human rights movement. I'm very grateful for the work that Mark has done and continued all these years. On that trip, we bunked together and he has continued the fight for oppressed peoples, especially Jews, behind what used to be called the Iron Curtain. Mark, welcome.

If our witnesses could take their seats at the table.

(Videotape shown and English transcript distributed; see Appendix.)

Mr. Smith. Thank you, John. I would ask that our witnesses now come to the witness table and make their presentations.

**STATEMENT OF LUDMILLA ALEXEYeva,
CHAIR, MOSCOW HELSINKI GROUP;
PRESIDENT, THE INTERNATIONAL HELSINKI FEDERATION**

Ms. Alexeyeva. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to speak in American Congress about the situation with human rights in Russia.

The situation with human rights in Russia is by no means better than it used to be in the Soviet Union. It is simply bad in a different way.

In the Soviet Union, the principle "man exists for the benefit of the State", was legally secured and religiously carried into life. The Constitution of the Russian Federation on the other hand, is founded on the principle "the State exists for the benefit of man." However, this principle does not work.

Certain human rights violations that were typical for the Soviet system are almost completely stifled. Persecutions for conscience are over. Censorship is destroyed. The right freely to leave one's country and come back there unrestrictedly is realized.

There is no discrimination due to one's national origins when seeking employment. Freedom of associations, demonstrations and meetings is observed. Nevertheless, the expanded access of information has unveiled those domains of life, which used to be hidden from the citizens' scrutiny and where human rights had been violated in the USSR and are still being violated in Russia.

We are talking about the ecological situation in the country which endangers the health and sometimes the very lives of the people of many cities or even regions. We are talking about tortures and humiliation of human dignity of men going through their mandatory 2 years of army service.

We are talking about the situation of children in orphanages, foster homes and other children's institutions. The violations of rights of specific categories of citizens have grown even stronger if compared to the Soviet times. This statement is true in relation to the discrimination of soldiers.

Today, the so-called "dedovsh'ina"—i.e., tortures and beatings of young soldiers by their commanders—became mass phenomenons. The discrimination of women has intensified. Dismissals from work wedded other earlier existing forms of discrimination of females. With almost each employer, women nowadays are first to be laid off.

Finally, in Russia, a new category of people suffering of constant violations of their rights has appeared. It is the one of refugees and forced migrants. Also, a completely new form of human rights violation has emerged—the greater part of the country's population endures systematic delays in payments of wages, pensions, and all kinds of state benefits.

Despite the overwhelming variety of human rights violations in Russia and their truly mass character, one key problem exists. Russian human rights activists perceive that the contemporary major problem is not in the domain of political persecutions the way it used to be in the USSR, but instead in the phenomenon of legal nihilism of all the state officials, from the most powerful ones to the most insignificant ones.

In the contemporary Russian Federation, the state officials have basically privatized their positions, and many of them use the power that their position gives to them, neither in the interests of the citizens, as the Constitution demands, nor in the interests of the State, nor the law.

They actually use it with the purpose of their own enrichment or sometimes just to exercise their petty tyranny over people and over the law itself. In the Russian Federations, laws are not observed and do work nowhere at all—neither at industrial enterprises, nor in the financial sphere, nor in the children's institutions, nor in the executive power bodies.

But the most terrible thing is, they do not work within the framework of law-enforcing organs, like police and prosecutors' offices. It is even more outrageous that Russian courts make one corporation with these "law-violating" organs.

Once a man is brought to a police station for the most trivial reason, or sometimes for no reason at all, he has to face an absolutely real danger not ever to leave it alive or to leave it already convicted of a terrible crime, like murder, of which he is perfectly innocent.

Every time regional human rights activists get together for seminars and conferences, they all express the following opinion—scorn for the law, corruption, and criminality of courts and law enforcing organs became the most substantive danger for the State and its citizens.

Human rights organizations and public legal offices more often than not have to face the following situation: a case concerning the violation of human rights of a citizen who asked them for help because his rights had been violated, is taken through all the legal instances all the way to the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation. Then, the Supreme Court only confirms the unjust original verdict.

Verdicts are either blindly approved, or basically stamped, at each judicial stage or put off for additional investigation, while the accused, whose guilt is not proven, is kept in custody, sometimes for years to no end.

Police, prosecutors' offices, and courts have merged into one corporation, primarily preoccupied by the task of protection of their own interests and of the honor of the uniform, already tainted by the bulk of unjust actions.

Protection of law and order is something they are not concerned with. The paralysis of the power branches in the domain of protection of law and order has already reached the degree, when it is necessary to proclaim that our Motherland is in danger.

Human rights activists, who constantly face the law enforcing organs and have a realistic view of the overall situation in the country, believe ever more strongly that it makes no sense just to critique the authorities for violating the Constitution and the Law, because the authorities do not have the power to force the officials to abide by the law.

The only way to correct the situation, which is most dangerous for the very existence of the society and the State, is to establish the institution of public control over all the domains of human life related to human rights.

The citizens and society have to aid our weakening authorities. The efforts of the authorities and the society have to be united with the purpose of restoring law and order. Fast expansion and maturing of the human rights movement testify to the fact that the society is already conscious of the necessity to become active to the adherence of the law.

Unfortunately, Russian officials mostly do not realize that public control over their actions is indispensable. The realization of this necessity seemed to have flashed in the President's last address to the Federal Assembly in which the President called for "working out the mechanisms of interaction with human rights organizations" as so to "use the potentials of public organizations for the benefit of practical protection of the citizens' rights."

But the road from good intentions reflected in the President's address to the actual realization of public control will be quite long and difficult.

Will then, Russian society be capable of forcing the gang of officials to abide by the law before the dissipation of the State becomes inevitable? This is what the future of all the people that live in this country depends on. We want to succeed so very much.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. Smith. Thank you very much for your excellent testimony. We will have some questions later on. I'm not sure what your time is but I would like to ask all of our witnesses if they would make their presentations and then we'll get to some questions.

I would ask Dr. Bonner if you would mind coming to the witness table? Dr. Bonner is joined by her son, Alexi Semonyov, who will do the translation for her.

STATEMENT OF DR. ELENA BONNER, CHAIR, THE ANDREI SAKHAROV FOUNDATION, AND ONE OF THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF THE MOSCOW HELSINKI GROUP

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator). The general human rights situation currently in the Soviet Union has been just described by my colleague, Ludmilla Alexeyeva.

I want to use my remarks to discuss a particular question that is very important for the human rights movement and organizations in Russia. If I wanted to give a short characterization of the period that our country has went through from 1991 to the present moment, I would say that whether Russia has moved forward or backward is questionable, but it has moved from Derzhinskii to Derzhinskii—a reference to the first chairman of the feared KGB, or Cheka.

I will explain a little bit. In August 1991 at the height of the hopes of the Russian people for the democratization and development of the country, the people have removed the monument in the center of Moscow to Felix Derzhinskii.

But presently at the end of 1998 the Russian legislative body, the State Duma, has just adopted a decision calling for the restoration of that monument. I think that this gives a clear picture that there really was no democratic development in Russia overall during this period.

I believe that one of the more important reasons for the absence of the progress in democratic development is slow or weak development of the civil society institutions which prevents the real reformation of the State.

I'm not talking about mistakes that have been made in the economic development of Russia. I am talking presently only about the reformation of the society. I believe in that regard that the help that was given to our country from Western Europe and the United States was not properly allocated to the goals.

The financial aid, in the case of the United States, is delivered by the USAID, and is primarily directed toward the State and only very small part of it gets to human rights-oriented organizations or societal organizations.

Personally, I represent one such organization; that is the Museum and the Community Center of Peace, Progress, and Human Rights named after Andrei Sakharov. Our organization was created with substantial, crucial even, financial help from several American organizations, including to a large degree, USAID.

But I know that other human rights organizations received either no assistance from USAID or very little in terms of percentages of the total aid delivered to Russia.

An important aspect of aid delivery is that when it is given to public organizations, such as human rights organizations, such as our organization, we are required to deliver complete financial reporting or submit to auditing, and we also are completely open to control of society.

The primary funds that go directly to the State or to the State-related organizations are practically not controlled at all as to how they are spent. Then the question is of establishing the control of the society over the actions of such government entities in Russia as the administration of prisons and camps or the courts.

That is of course, the task for the society in Russia, for the civil society, but when we are talking about controlling how the money delivered from abroad is spent in these organizations, then it is the task of the United States and other donors to make sure that these funds are spent the way they were intended to.

Especially because the Russian mass media has recently been emphasizing that the aid delivered from abroad puts the country in the position of financial dependence on the West. Because of that concern it is very important for the society to know how this money is spent and to be sure whether it is spent the way it was supposed to.

One specific note. The USAID has announced its plan or intention for the next year to establish a new procedure for helping the human rights or public organizations. Such organizations will have to present a financial plan, and the USAID would fund 50 percent of it, provided that it is in general, supporting that organization. The other 50 percent will have to come from internal sponsors within Russia. Given the financial situation in Russia after the August 17th crisis it is unrealistic to expect that these organizations will be able to come up with the required goal of 50 percent support internally.

I fear that many organizations will be placed in the position of either closing or contracting their activities substantially. In particular, I am very much afraid for our museum and center.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith. Thank you very much for your statement, in which you've given us a few follow-up action items with regards to our government and our AID program. We will endeavor to revisit those programs, especially in terms of the match of funding.

Let me ask a couple of questions. Before you arrived, Dr. Bonner, all of us saw, and I'm sure you're very familiar with, the hate tirades that have been displayed by General Makashov. Reading from the translation of the video, "In the event of my death or the death of my brothers-in-arms, I'll take 10 of those Yids with me—from a list of them—to the other world. We're not going to just give up."

He also has stated: "Yeltsin—out of here! And as for the other perestroika types and reformers I repeat, we'll have a trial according to law and take them out to the execution spot on Red Square, but we won't just flog them, we'll do worse."

Now, at first brush that sounds like the ranting and ravings of a madman, but here's a man that's still wearing his General's uniform as a member of the Duma.

What kind of response does that kind of hate rhetoric get among the Russian people? Is he speaking for a very narrow band of Russian leaders and people, or is this something that is growing in its danger?

We cannot ignore these kinds of statements, because if you go back in history, there were always similar signs from people before the Holocaust and before every other major trauma the world has ever known. There are always first signs.

If you could, does Gen. Makoshov have a following? When Zhirinovsky was making his statements many of us thought he was more isolated, but now we're seeing these kinds of statements proliferated, including Zhuganov.

Whoever would like to respond first.

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator) I would not want to say that the Russian people have inbred anti-Semitic feelings in them, but because of the difficult financial situation, especially difficult in provinces—it is less noticeable in major centers such as Moscow or St. Petersburg—the chauvinistic feelings are on the increase.

I believe that the Russian laws and capabilities of the government give them the possibility of reacting much stronger to statements like these than the way they do right now. I also think that the international community of lawmaking bodies should also react when statements such as Makashov's are being made in Russia.

Ms. Alexeyeva. If you permit, I would like to add to this remark, but if possible I would like Lyosha to translate for me because saying it in English accurately is difficult for me.

(Through translator) I believe that the statements of General Makashov or similar statements by Ilyukhin and Zyuganov are less an expression of the feelings by Russian people but actually an expression of the politics of the Communist Party. All these people are leading members, leading politicians of the Communist Party.

The fact that three of the people have made these statements within a very short time (actually four because Saleznov also made similar statements), shows that this is an established policy of the Communist Party and probably will continue to be so for some time.

And I want to support and join my friend, Dr. Bonner here, and say that in this situation in particular, we, the human rights organizations in Russia, need the support of the legislators of the democratic countries.

The Moscow Helsinki Group, of which I am member and chairperson, has appealed to all the legislative bodies in the democratic countries in this regard.

That letter said that honorable people would not shake hands with anti-Semites, so we said that self-respecting, legislative bodies, parliaments of the democratic countries and their individual members should not deal with Russia's parliament, the State Duma, because its majority represents the Party that clearly has adopted anti-Semitic and chauvinistic position.

Specifically we have suggested that members of parliaments of the democratic countries should refuse the State Duma's invitations to visit Russia and should not invite to visit their countries or at least any of the members of the Russian State Duma who have voted against the denunciation of Makashov's statement.

We have a complete list of the names of those people who voted against such denunciation and thus expressed their support for the position of General Makashov. I would have been grateful if the CSCE would find it possible to support our Helsinki group in this regard.

Mr. Smith. Let me just ask a follow-up to that, then. You know, we know the communists have never seen a lack of majority or majority opinion or will as an impediment to imposing their will, historically, and I think that can be said about the present.

With the elections coming up soon—we know the Duma is already in communist hands to the year 2000. There will be a real horse race, I think, for the Presidency. The U.S. and other Western governments have often been criticized for not having contact with political leaders other than the heads of government.

For a while it was Gorbachev, then it became Yeltsin, and it is still Yeltsin. I remember meeting with Yeltsin on one Helsinki trip when he was Moscow mayor and he said, "Why do you only talk to Gorbachev? You never talk to anyone else. You have no idea what's going on here."

We hear that complaint echoed by scholars who say we have a Moscow fixation and that we keep the focus on Yeltsin, which is why we can be caught off guard. Dr. Bonner spoke to this when she testified in

1995, about our miscues and perhaps a green light that we gave to Yeltsin in Chechnya. It seems we just didn't have a clue what else was going on.

When Dr. James Billington, Commissioner Frank Wolf, Congressman from Virginia, and Congressman Tony Hall, a real humanitarian, went last January to Moscow, Yeltsin was out of town and we met with his people on the religious law and had numerous discussions about why we thought it was a step backwards with regards to religious freedom.

We then tried to get meetings with members of the Duma and could not get those meetings. We finally just went over to the Duma and starting walking the halls the way anyone here in America would walk the halls. Actually we visited two members of the Duma, including Mr. Lukyanchico. I won't say much came out of the meeting except an expression of two different opinions.

It seems to me that isolation could breed its own problems. While I don't think we should be feting people who make horrible statements like the ones we have heard today, how do you keep a dialog going, and, hopefully encourage real democracy, without talking, and yes, even confronting these people?

In your response, please also provide your thoughts on what you see in 2000 and beyond. The year 2000 has all kinds of apocalyptic implications—real or imagined—for many people. But the year 2000 also will bring the Presidential campaign. However poorly or well Yeltsin has managed his country, there are many people waiting in the wings who would take Russia back to the days of Brezhnev.

What is your feeling in terms of where Russia could be heading in the very near future as well?

Ms. Alexeyeva. Well, I think I said one thing about the Communist faction of the Duma, I do not think that a talk with this faction about democracy will be fruitful anyway, because they have their opinion about democracy and about Russia's future.

And I think it would be very helpful if distinguished Congressmen from Western countries would openly say, we do not want to deal with you because you are an anti-Semitic faction. I do not mean full isolation but isolation of the people who show themselves as anti-Semitic.

Mr. Smith. Thank you. Dr. Bonner?

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator) As far as the Russian State Duma is concerned, the rightist fraction is Communist Party. There are several important other factions including the faction Yablako, which is a democratic party.

There are also several independent members of the State Duma. There is important statistical material available to people who want to look at the actions of the State Duma—the results of the open votes.

On some questions it is easy to distinguish between one and the other type of members of Duma. The resolution on the denunciation of the statement by General Makashov has been voted openly. Or consider such an important economical law as the right of private land ownership. That was also voted openly.

The results of the vote record on that resolution immediately show which of the members is really interested in real reform and who is only paying duty to the reform.

I also want to say that I think the most important election that Russia is facing in the future is not the Presidential election in year 2000 but the election of Duma, which is going to take place at the end of '99—just 10 months from now.

The results of that election will very much determine the economic future of the country because if you analyze the errors or mistakes made in economic policy, many of them originated not with the actions of the government, but with the actions of Duma.

It also would be decisive in terms of the political reform. In the end, whoever is elected President will be changing his positions to those closer to the position of the Duma overall. So the Duma will be acting as a magnet of sorts.

Mr. Smith. I have a few follow-up questions and then I'd like to ask Mr. Lautenberg's staff member to proceed with questions on behalf of Commissioner Lautenberg, Senator Lautenberg from my state of New Jersey, who wanted to be here but could not join because of what's going on over there on the Senate side. Mr. Baron will ask a couple of questions in a moment.

Let me ask a few follow-up questions. Dr. Bonner, you mentioned that the aid provided by the United States and other western countries was not properly allocated. Could you tell us who was at fault, whether or not the aid that was provided was just wasted or was it counter-productive—actually falling into the wrong hands? Where should the aid be allocated?

We have been encouraging—and the Administration has initiated it even without that encouragement—an attempt to try to put more of the money into non-governmental organizations—NGOs—so the accountability and hopefully the productivity of that money will be enhanced.

Again, with the elections of the Duma coming up and then the Presidential election, should we be increasing our aid to the truly democratic forces so that they can run effective campaigns of opposition in Russia?

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator) Very little is known about how the money that the State apparatus receives is actually spent. The society has no real controls or information sources in that regard.

But we know that there are significant funds allocated to specific goals, e.g., for the housing of the members of the armed forces withdrawn from Eastern Europe and Germany, for the conversion of a military-industrial complex.

There were also funds directed toward creation labor places for miners and for the conversion or closing of failed mines; funds for reform of court system. There was also such things as administrative projects, e.g., preparing the administration of privatization funds.

All of these goals had significant money—billions of dollars—attached to them and none of them was achieved. Nothing was done in these specific areas. I cannot state whether these funds were stolen or just mismanaged and wasted. It is a matter for the courts to decide questions like that.

But the controls of such funds were insufficient and I believe—I stated it before—I believe that these controls have to be established by the party that gives the money.

Mr. Smith. As I think all of you know—

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator) As to the second part of the question, I believe that support for the human rights organization or the institutions of the civil society should be increased in general as proportion of overall aid.

And it also makes sense to do so in relation to the elections that are approaching. We do not know where Communist Party is getting their funding but they have plenty. They have sufficient funds from whatever sources they do.

Mr. Smith. Ms. Alexeyeva, you mentioned in your statement about needs of the multitudes of children in orphanages. We are becoming increasingly aware of the dire situation of the orphans, which is right out of the pages of what we discovered in Romania when Ceausescu fell with large numbers of kids being mistreated in orphanages.

One of our networks this week carried a major piece on these children. And the point was made that to care for the number of children, there are not enough nurses and help. They have misdiagnosed many kids. One child that had a cleft palate was thought to be mentally retarded and was tracked into something that he never got out of until recently.

I recently wrote Brian Atwood, our AID administrator, asking that more be done to assist these kids. I think there would be a groundswell of support in Congress, both Democrat and Republican, to assist those children.

How can we help in that situation? Is more money part of the answer? Do we need to provide expertise? We're ever aware, especially in the area of adoption and orphanages, that countries close off international adoption. The PRC has done this, I remember Romania did it, and Russia threatened recently they were going to close off all adoption. If we can take care of some children, and meanwhile kids are languishing in these substandard housing units or orphanages, it seems we should extend the offer.

What should we do?

Of course, it needs the help very much in particular from the rest too, I would repeat what I said in my testimony. Any help and any actions from the rest too, should be made with public control. Because if—I repeat the same that Dr. Bonner has said—if it is established over the State officials, it'll be so nice and will bring results.

And the public control is our key, because in any area of our life the only safety, the only possibility to work out something good, is for everything to be done under public control because our records show that those who work—they cannot work themselves, they cannot work. And we should at least try to do it.

I don't think that we are very experienced as controllers, but at least we are not thieves. We would like to do good, and moreover, we have some groups—Moscow has such a group, such a program, the children's rights—and the main aim of this program is to organize public control over foster families and other children's institutions.

And you know, I thought that it would be very easy to reach agreement with our officials in this area because if we asked for public control in the army for example, they'd say it's secret. In the parliamentary system they would relate with crime and so on.

But children, why should they be isolated? Why should they be isolated from the public, from the public control? But their resistance is very strong, very strong. And I cannot find any answer, any explanation, only that they would like to spend the money given by the State gives without control.

I have no other explanation. And it's very important to help in this area. It is a necessary condition, that this money should be spent with control.

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator) I wanted to add that at our center there is a working group on the rights of children. On 10th of December, last month, we have published a large report on the state of the rights of children in Russia.

And although it is a small group we are now actively working on forming similar groups or chapters in other regions. I think that this group should be asked to participate in the control of how the funds provided for the children's welfare are spent. We should act as a sort of public overseer.

Mr. Smith. Thank you for that suggestion. I think it's an excellent one. Let me ask one final question.

The Clinton Administration to its credit, has expressed outrage to the rising tide of anti-Semitism, especially as expressed through some of its leading politicians like Zyuganov. Madeleine Albright, our Secretary of State, is planning on a trip at the end of this month, and will probably be meeting with Yeltsin, but certainly with the top leadership and hopefully with him as well.

I've been advised by the State Department that the delegation will not be meeting with Zyuganov. The State Department has said, "We don't intend to give him a high level reception anywhere until he acknowledges his egregious errors on this score, in particular his offensive statement that appeared in the Russian press in late December."

If Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was sitting right here, what would message would you convey to her? Of course, your testimonies will be provided to her and some of her staff from the Russian desk are even here today.

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator) In the past many State Secretaries, Secretaries of State, on their visits to Moscow, have met with dissidents and have listened very attentively to the suggestions generated during such meetings.

Today using our center as the base, there is a group in Moscow, a very active group called Common Action that unites practically all human rights organizations in Moscow and Russia.

We would be very grateful and think that it would be useful, if Secretary Albright would find it possible to visit our center and to meet with this group, the Common Action, thus meeting with practically all human rights organizations.

Mr. Smith. That's an excellent suggestion and we will convey that, and Mr. Godfrey is here from the State Department. I hope he brings that back as well because that is a very fine suggestion.

I'd like to ask Mr. Baron [Frederic Baron, staff of Sen. Frank Lautenberg] if he has any questions.

Mr. Baron. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity. As you noted, human rights in Russia remains an area of particular concern for Senator Lautenberg and he regrets not being able to be here, but I appreciate the opportunity to ask a few questions to clarify a few of these issues.

We've heard a lot about and much concern about anti-Semitic remarks made by Makashov, by Zyuganov, by Ilyukhin and others. In another country in Europe, in Poland, where anti-Semitism has been and remains an issue of concern, the political leadership including President Kwasniewsky, have at least made an effort to reach out to the Jewish community and to counter anti-Semitism within Poland.

Do you see any political figures in Russia willing to take a courageous stand and say, the Jewish community is not the source of our economic problems? In fact, some Jewish people have been a key element of the solution to these problems? To take an active stand against anti-Semitism, rather than having that only come from people in the United States and from activists such as yourselves?

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator) There are quite a few organizations and significant people who take the position quite opposite to that of General Makashov and others. There is an anti-Fascist league that is a youth organization and that is very active in fighting these kinds of statements and behavior.

Also of course, majority of the political figures in Russia do not express anti-Semitic views. Apart from the Communist Party itself and some marginal groups that are fellow travelers, all other political figures or movements do not support or express anti-Semitic positions.

MS. Alexeyeva. Many Congressmen and the President and many State officials have publicly denounced this appeal of Makashov and other Communists. It is terrible that because these people spoke publicly, our country and our people look like anti-Semitic people and anti-Semitic country.

I do believe it is not so, and I do believe that the majority of the Nation is against such appeals and against this politics. I repeat it again: These are the politics of the Communist Party, not of the Russian nation, and not even of the contemporary Russian state now.

For example, I am an expert of the Presidential Council against political extremists. We had the second session of this Council yesterday. We discussed very seriously what to do in this situation and how to fight this Communist attack.

And I repeat it again: these are the politics of the Communist Party, not Russian State and of course, not the Russians.

Mr. Baron. One other area that you highlighted in your testimony was related to abuses in the Russian military: denial of human dignity of those who are brought in for their—I believe it is 2 years of service.

Obviously over time, this affects not only the institutional culture of the military but also the society-at-large. What do you see that could be done to help change the situation in the military?

Ms. Alexeyeva. There is public concern about this situation and the Committees of Mothers of Soldiers are very effective in this area. But of course it is not enough, and the only way to stop this tendency is only way to reform our army. Now our army can be defined as inordinate and we should have human order in the army.

Mr. Smith. Thank you very much, Mr. Baron. I want to just thank you very distinguished panel for your insights which will be acted upon, weighed, and hopefully both the Administration and Congress will heed your very instructive counsel. Thank you very much.

I would ask our second panel if they would make their way to the witness table at this point. Unless you have any final parting comments—either of you?

Ms. Alexeyeva. No, thank you. It was very helpful discussion, thank you.

Dr. Bonner. (Through translator) Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith. Mr. Satter, Mr. Uzzell, Mr. Naftalin, Mr. Levin, thank you for being here and your full statements will be made a part of the record but I would ask you to proceed however you would like to.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID SATTER,
SENIOR FELLOW, THE HUDSON INSTITUTE**

Mr. Satter. Mr. Chairman, the end of the Soviet Union did not bring an end to human rights abuses in Russia. If, under the Soviet regime, individuals suffered at the hands of the repressive machinery of the state, the threat to human rights today stems from Russia's pervasive lawlessness and the individual's today physical and moral vulnerability.

As a direct result of the attempt to introduce capitalism quickly and without a moral or legal framework, a criminal business oligarchy arose in Russia. This oligarchy does not persecute people for their beliefs. It is interested solely in money. But no individual is safe from it if he interferes with the process by which it is stealing the Nation's wealth.

The result is that human rights in Russia are violated by the wielders of criminal oligarchical power on a massive scale.

In the first place, in case of business or political conflict, ordinary Russians cannot protect themselves against violence or intimidation. In most localities, part if not most of the police force has been appropriated by the local criminal business oligarchy and the police will offer no protection to a citizen who, intentionally or inadvertently, interferes with them even when the complainant is obviously in danger of being killed.

The subordination of the police and, to a great extent, the courts to business criminal Mafias, has instilled a total lack of faith in law enforcement. Russians are afraid to respond to a knock at the door, to testify as witnesses in trials involving gangsters or to intervene on behalf of the victim of a crime.

Russian citizens are also deprived of the right to private property. Operating a business without paying protection money either to criminal gangs or to the police is nearly impossible in Russia. At the level of small and medium sized businesses, the grip of organized crime is almost universal and businessmen make regular extortion payments to avoid being killed by their "protectors."

It may therefore be more accurate to say that the businesses actually belong to the gangs although even the gang's control of the business is based on its relative strength and not on any legal right to it.

Finally, in a state in which criminals, businessmen and government officials are constituent parts of rival and competing criminal syndicates who do not accept any overriding, universal rules, the individual cannot hope for any redress of his grievances under the law. Millions of workers go for months without pay although the failure to pay salaries is illegal in Russia. Millions more were cheated of their life savings in fraudulent investment and pyramid schemes but, despite court decisions in their favor, were unable to recover their money.

If an individual loses his life or health because of government or organizational negligence, he has little hope of seeing either compensation or action taken against the guilty parties.

A horrifying example of the negligence that total legal impunity helps to inspire was the case of 10-year-old Artyem Mkrtumyan who was boiled alive, February 22, 1998, when he fell into a pit of boiling water that had been created by a leaking hot water pipe in the center of Moscow.

His father, Vladimir, who jumped into the pit in an attempt to save him, was also killed. But the last time I spoke to Galina Mkrtumyan, Vladimir's wife and Artyem's mother, she had received no compensation and no one had been punished for the crime of negligence which allowed this tragedy to take place.

It is worth noting in this respect, that the organization responsible for Moscow's hot water pipes is part of the city administration headed by Yuri Luzhkov, a leading candidate to become the next president of Russia.

The new face of human rights abuses in Russia in which the individual is deprived utterly of the protection of the law in the face of criminal business Mafias, should be of deep concern to the United States.

Fear for one's physical security and the conviction that one is helpless to assure the safety of one's family can only have a corrosive effect, both morally and spiritually. When this condition is generalized to an entire population, it instills a distaste for democracy and a desire for authoritarian solutions that, in Russia, could have violent consequences.

Insofar as the world has a vested interest in preserving stability in Russia, it is important that the abuse of the Russian population made possible by the current state of lawlessness in Russia be recognized as Russia's most important and overriding human rights issue.

Thank you.

Mr. Smith. Thank you, Mr. Satter. Mr. Uzzell.

**STATEMENT OF LARRY UZZELL,
MOSCOW REPRESENTATIVE, THE KESTON INSTITUTE**

Mr. Uzzell. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, I want to thank you personally, Mr. Chairman, for everything you have done to promote religious freedom in Russia, especially your trip last January that I think has played no small role in the result that actual enforcement of the 1997 law on religion is at least so far, a lot less harsh than the text of the law itself is.

And also personally, Chris, it is a great pleasure to appear before you in this forum. I remember how we first met 21 years ago and it gives me personal pleasure to be working with you 21 years later on the issues that you were campaigning on back in 1978.

I don't have a written statement but anyone who wants to go into these issues in far more detail than is possible now, can just look at our website. The Keston Institute website is www.keston.org.

I'm going to talk about the new law, now a little more than a year old. I will try to make three points quickly. Forgive me if I talk fast. First, American Protestant missionaries have not suffered much so far under the new law but paradoxically, that is bad news.

It's rather difficult to find—not impossible but difficult—cases of Protestant missionaries whose lives are significantly worse today in Russia than they were when the law was passed.

It is not at all difficult to find examples of indigenous Protestants, especially Pentecostals, whose lives have grown worse. The irony of this is that the law was passed in a climate of hysteria whipped up precisely against foreigners.

This was supposed to be a law, according to the text of the law itself and the debates surrounding its passage, to protect Holy Mother Russia against novel, alien, foreign influences such as American Protestants.

The fact that missionaries from the West have suffered little while indigenous Russian minorities have suffered a great deal more, is yet one more proof of what a lawless society Russia has become.

If I were to summarize overall, what has happened over the last year-and-a-half, I would say it comes down to a slight acceleration of a trend that is about 5 years old now, of the diminishing of religious freedom as of other basic human rights.

Russians do not overall, have much less religious freedom today than they did a year-and-a-half ago, but they have significantly less than they had 5 years ago, or than they would have if the 1993 Russian Constitution with its quite splendid provisions on religious freedom were taken seriously in Russia.

I predict that a year from now Russians will have less religious freedom than they do today. As I said, indigenous Protestants have suffered more than others; especially worse in real estate.

It's quite common now for Pentecostals, Adventists, Baptists who, a few years ago without any particular problem, were renting places such as movie theaters or public auditoriums for their worship services, now to be told that they cannot continue to rent these sites unless they get permission of the local Orthodox priests.

This is just as much a violation of the new 1997 law as it would have been of the old 1990 law. The new 1997 law, like the 1990 law which it replaced, says that no clergy of any church are to play a role in official government decisions.

This is especially serious in a country where there is still no free market in real estate; where any room where you might have a public meeting of more than the smallest size is owned by the State—whether it is a school room or a local movie theater or the equivalent of a YMCA hall.

There are problems also for Catholics, especially concerning visas. We find an acceleration over the last 6 months of foreign clergy of all kinds being told that they can no longer get one-year, multiple-entry visas of the sort that used to be standard in Russia; that now you can only get a visa for 3 months at a time. To renew that visa you need to leave the country altogether to apply for renewal.

The Russian Foreign Ministry is trying to create the impression that this problem has been solved. That is partly true. I do think in my best judgment that the Russian Foreign Ministry is trying in good faith, to solve this problem. It is waging a battle within the Russian bureaucracy against other ministries, but that battle is far from won.

The Russian Interior Ministry is still resisting. And this problem is especially acute for Catholics. For perfectly understandable reasons most Catholic clergy in Russia today are still foreigners.

There was no possibility for a young man to receive a Catholic seminary education in Russia until the early 1990s, and it will be decades before enough graduates of the newly revived seminary in St. Petersburg are available for a majority of the Catholic clergy within Russia to be citizens of the Russian Federation.

Second point, the empire is striking back. Whenever I travel about provincial Russia one of the first questions I ask when I visit a provincial capital is, who is the local upolnomochenny—the local plenipotentiary? Everybody immediately knows what I mean by that word, even though it is not usually an official, formal title in today's Russia.

There used to be a structure called the Council for Religious Affairs under the Soviet regime; the explicit mission of which was to suppress independent, religious activity in the interests of the atheist, totalitarian state.

Today, more and more often in the provinces there are officials with titles like Advisor to the Governor on Church/State Relations, or Head of the Provincial Committee on Cooperation with Religious Organizations.

About half the time I find that the chief provincial official in this category turns out to be the very same person who 10, 15 years ago, was the chief provincial official of the old Soviet Council for Religious Affairs, the upolnomochenny. In other words, the old network and the old structures are coming back, and doing, to some extent, the same things, just under new names.

Third point, the action now is in the provinces. One thing that the 1997 law has in common with the old 1990 law—which was a breakthrough toward human rights, one triumph of glasnost, now largely repealed by the repressive 1997 law—one thing that they have in common is that ostensibly they impose a uniform national policy on Church/State relations.

The 1990 law imposed a policy of religious freedom; the 1997 law imposes a policy of religious repression. But they do have that in common: it is supposed to be a uniform, nationwide policy.

You travel around the Russian provinces as I do and you find that in practice what we have is 89 provinces that are more and more functioning like 89 separate countries. The provinces are more and more independent of Moscow, they're more and more diverse, more and more different than from each other.

Some of them are islands of freedom. I have been to provinces where I have asked local religious minorities, what effect has the new law had on you? The answer is, none. They have just as much freedom today as they did before the law was passed.

A few months ago I was down in Stavropol, Gorbachev's hometown in the south of Russia. I found that unregistered Protestants there are openly disobeying the new law and not even seeking State registration, although so far State registration has not been that difficult to get under the new law. These technically illegal Protestants are freely passing out brochures on the streets, are renting movie theaters and the like. Nobody is interfering with them. In this case the new law is being violated in favor of freedom.

In other places such as Ulyanovsk, the birthplace of Lenin in the mid-Volga valley, one of the great bastions of Leninism where there is still a living cult of Lenin today which has one of the most retrograde governments of all the Russian provinces, Protestants are finding great difficulty renting places in which to worship.

Even the Orthodox in Ulyanovsk are finding great difficulty. The established religion in effect, of Ulyanovsk is Buddhism—Buddhism and some neo-Oriental Russian equivalents of America's new-age movement, which that local atheist government favors over any form of Christianity, including Orthodox Christianity, the historic religion of Russian Christians.

On the other hand, there are local provincial officials in places like Ekaterinburg—local specialists on Church/State relations—who are using their official powers to work for religious tolerance. The advisor to

the mayor of Ekaterinburg in the Urals, which is the hometown of Boris Yeltsin, has used her position to turn that province's new law, which is rather repressive, into essentially a dead letter.

As a result, the province of Sverdlovsk, and especially its capital city of Ekaterinburg, are much freer than the average place in Russia.

What I conclude from this, Mr. Chairman, is perhaps the most controversial thing that I have to say—there are lots of people who know more about Russia than I ever will who disagree with me about this—but fools rush in where the angels fear to tread and I will express my opinion; others may challenge it.

I think that on balance, this transfer of power from Moscow to the provinces is a good thing. In the short run it may look like a very bad thing. On balance, most of my friends in Moscow think that the average provincial Governor is less pro-freedom than the average official in the Yeltsin administration. That certainly was true 6 months ago. I am not sure that it is true today.

But I would suggest that even if it is true, in the long run history shows that nowhere in the world has humanity been able to build a free polity on a land mass the size of Russia or North America, without organizing it as some kind of decentralized federation.

The Russian State, for all of its history has been one of the most hyper-centralized states in the world. Decentralization of basic decisionmaking powers to the provincial Governors in the long run is going to do more good than harm.

We're already seeing that a kind of laboratory, a mosaic of different approaches to various policies, is emerging. A province like Samara on the southern Volga, is a bastion, not only of religious freedom but of economic freedom as well.

I think that Russians, over time, are going to learn by trial and error which types of policy work and which do not work, from their own experience. They are going to find that the spiritual life of the citizenry, the health and vitality of the Orthodox Church are better in those provinces that do not use police-state tactics against religious minorities.

This process is going to take a long time. In the short run Russia will have less freedom than it has today, but in the long run I do believe that Russia will be free. Thank you.

Mr. Smith. Thank you; excellent presentation of insight into the situation. I would like to state for the record, you know, Mr. Uzzell has provided the Helsinki Commission on frequent occasions, including in our briefings, the kind of insights and expertise of someone who moves in the provinces and gives us then, the benefit of what he learns from that.

And before our trip to Moscow last January, the information you provided was extremely useful to all of us in helping us to understand and then to promote, push the envelope as far as we could. So thank you very much.

Mr. Satter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Smith. Mr. Naftalin.

**STATEMENT OF MICAH NAFTALIN,
NATIONAL DIRECTOR, THE UNION OF COUNCILS
FOR SOVIET JEWS**

Mr. Naftalin. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have submitted to the staff a full statement with a few clippings. If possible, I'd like it in the record but I want to speed—

Mr. Smith. Without objection, everything will, including the «MD30»clippings as part of it.

Mr. Naftalin [continuing]. In the interest of time I will try to speed-read through a few highlights of my remarks.

Mr. Chairman, first, I want to thank you for these important and timely hearings. Human rights and rule of law have surely been among the most tragic casualties during the decline of democratic prospects in Russia, but conversely we would argue, the economic collapse of the Russian Federation can be attributed in part to a general failure of the Federation, but also its Western supporters, to give the priority to human rights and law reform comparable to the quest for markets and economic and fiscal stability.

In a moment I will turn to our major premise: that in the fall of 1998 the components of the previous fringe and grassroots manifestations of anti-Semitism in Russia turned critical, like the elements of a nuclear reactor, releasing an explosion of anti-Jewish events sanctioned by Russia's parliament and its chief political party. As the saying goes, "Attention must be paid."

In addition to Elena Bonner and Ludmilla Alexeyeva, I want to point out that we believe there is a third hero of the human rights movement in this room, and that is the Helsinki Commission itself.

The victories inside the former Soviet Union by the Soviet Jewry and human rights movements in the past and the necessary responses to present violations and opportunities have always and continue, to depend vitally on your good offices.

The UCSJ's monitoring in Russia confirms all of the previous testimony. We agree with all of it, especially those with respect to the near-universal lack of rule of law, and honest policing and prosecuting.

In the past year-and-a-half we have campaigned most strenuously on two major issues other than anti-Semitism. One of course, is the Russian religion law and the other is the Nikitin case—I'll skip the issues; you know them as well as I—except to say that I'm sure you know that the case which was really thrown out by the lower court but nonetheless returned for investigation, will come before the Supreme Court on February 4th.

UCSJ continues to call on the Russian Government to drop this shameful case.

Mr. Chairman, my main testimony focuses on the alarming rise in official anti-Semitism in Russia and is based on our monitoring network, especially our bureaus in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

While too often overlooked or downplayed by academics and policymakers alike, UCSJ is convinced that the tracking of anti-Semitism provides a valid barometer and predictor of the viability of a civil society and its reliability as an international partner and signer of defense, trade, and environmental treaties.

In August we reported on the extensive dangers of grassroots anti-Semitism and concluded that the danger to Jews in Russia and the entire FSU region, long reported by UCSJ, is now graver than ever. That was in August. So what's new and different today?

Throughout the Czarist, Soviet, and now post-Soviet times there has always been anti-Semitism, although it is just now that we are hearing again the predictions of pogroms in certain regions.

In the past 2 years we have heard and made the comparison of Russia to pre-Nazi Weimar Germany that similarly, was awash in depression, hyperinflation, and political instability. What was lacking before November 1998 was the spark needed to incite the violent scapegoating of anti-Semitic Fascism.

Recently, anti-Semitic attitudes have been broadly held but direct action and incitement to violence against Jews has been largely marginalized to the extremist fringes.

We perceive a dramatic increase in the level and threat of violence and political intimidation aimed at Jews that has now been made possible—the spark ignited by the action of the Duma to endorse anti-Semitic threats of General Makashov, followed by the assassination of Galina Starovoitova, and concluded by the December manifesto that establishes anti-Semitism as a policy of the Communist Party of Russia.

In other words, the acts of November have offered to formerly passive anti-Semites the permission they previously lacked to openly act out their Jewish hatred. Communist officials supported General Makashov.

Then in late December, harking back to the Soviet-era canard that he is not anti-Semitic but merely anti-Zionist, Zyuganov published an open letter manifesto, as we all know. He blamed the problems of the country on the spread of Zionism. He compared Zionism with Nazism as a blood relative, and he gave the Jews advice on how to behave.

At the grassroots level we see among the most powerful, the Russian National Unity Party, the RNE, the Nazi uniformed, swastika-bearing troops of Barkashov, who “keep order.” I describe close ties throughout Russia, really, between the RNE and local, public officials, police, FSB, media—in Kstovo, in Barovichi, in Krasnodar—on and on and on. The youth group, Russian Knights, the use of the KGB to influence and censor local newspapers who want to print letters to the editor.

In most of these cases, each of which are violations of Russian law, appeals to the Procurator General in Moscow go unheeded. Nor has Prime Minister Primakov, unlike Yeltsin, been known to condemn the rising tide of official and grassroots anti-Semitism.

Let me just turn to a couple of concluding thoughts, Mr. Chairman. First, the existence of anti-Semitism and the failure of authorities to speak out, to investigate, to prosecute, is a valid barometer of the ill health of the society.

And the failure of governmental leaders, national and local, to take responsibility for ending it is a measure of the true, anti-democratic inclinations of those leaders, whether they be friend or foe.

Perhaps most fearful, the West, in a massive denial that the Emperor wears no clothes, has been issuing propaganda for many years that Russia is truly an emerging democracy. Unfortunately, democracy as we know it has become, together with the Jews, a compelling scapegoat.

In closing, can I return to my introductory commendation to the Commission? While it is obvious to you, and I daresay to the Congress at large, that the combating of anti-Semitism is an important concern—for Jews, for Russian society, and for the prospects of democracy in the Russian Federation—it is largely in our judgment, off the radar screen of serious public concern elsewhere.

Indeed, with the sole exception of a recent seminar conducted by Paul Goble of Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty a few weeks ago, the Helsinki Commission is the only important venue I know of that takes seriously the direct and indirect implications of anti-Semitism and Fascism in Russia.

So as we have done so many times over the years, the Union of Councils commends you and your colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Smith. Thank you, Mr. Naftalin. Hopefully more will take note of the work that you do, and have done for decades, as well as what the Commission with its very professional staff and committed Commissioners have tried to do.

Again, on these issues, especially as it relates to anti-Semitism, both you and Mr. Levin have done yeoman's work. You mentioned Paul Goble. I believe it was Paul who, at a hearing that we had in the Commission a couple of years ago on the rising tide of anti-Semitism, talked about how it had been more or less privatized.

I think it was Paul who made that point. But, there were concerns that anti-Semitism could very quickly spill over and become more official. When you observe something that's happening in the private sector, there are always those who would exploit the trend and quickly use it to their own advantage in the public sector. True to form, that is happening right now.

So thank you for—yes?

Mr. Naftalin. And our concern is that these things have a way of growing exponentially, each time doubling. And that's what we—

Mr. Smith. We have invited—repeatedly invited—the press to be here today. They seem all to be enamored of what's going on in the other chamber. But we will try as best we can to get this message out.

You quoted something that should send shivers down everybody's spine about the pre-Nazi era: when so many people were asleep at the switch; when the signs were there that something catastrophic was in the making. All that is needed is a catalyst. The whole world is in economic chaos; for Russia in particular, certainly the economic collapse could be that catalyst.

Scapegoating could be exacerbated in the very near future. We can't be vigilant enough, and hopefully the Administration and both sides of the aisle, both chambers, will put more oars in the water to try to raise our voices on behalf of Soviet Jews, Russian Jews, and all other oppressed minorities.

Mr. Naftalin. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to say again, that while we are concerned naturally, about the political and physical safety of Jews—that's obvious, that's part of our job—I think the main victim is the Russian people. And in our tracking of anti-Semitism it's really tracking the human rights temperature of the entire country—it's a stand-in for all of the problems and not simply a matter of protecting Jews.

Mr. Smith. Thank you, Mr. Naftalin. Mr. Levin.

**STATEMENT OF MARK LEVIN,
DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON SOVIET JEWRY**

Mr. Levin. Mr. Chairman, thank you for those earlier kind words. It doesn't seem like it was 17 years ago this week that we were trying to walk across the frozen streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Much has happened in the intervening years—many positive things but unfortunately, we're here today to talk about something that all of us had hoped would begin to disappear but obviously hasn't.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask that my full statement be submitted for the record.

Mr. Smith. Without objection I would just note that you don't look any different; just a little taller.

Mr. Levin. Thank you, again. And I will say the same about you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I'm also here speaking on behalf of the Russian Jewish Congress. We tried to have Rabbi Pincus Goldschmidt here as a witness but unfortunately his schedule wouldn't permit him. And they are associated with my remarks.

HIAS, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the refugee agency of the United States Jewish community, has asked that I express its concern; that is, conditions for minorities have become increasingly precarious in the former Soviet Union, with many government authorities unwilling or unable to protect them.

Jewish and Christian evangelical refugee applicants have increasingly been denied refugee status by the INS in Moscow. Mr. Chairman, I would like to respectfully request that I be permitted to submit HIAS's statement for the record which discusses the changed country conditions to which the INS seems to be paying little attention in adjudicating refugee claims under the Lautenberg Amendment.

Mr. Smith. Without objection, it will be made a part of the record.

Mr. Levin. Mr. Chairman, I echo my colleague's good words for you and the Helsinki Commission for holding this hearing and for all the work that the Commission has done over the years. The staff of the Commission is one of the best on Capitol Hill, let alone in the U.S. Government. And I know that the Commissioners appreciate the good work that they continue to do.

The testimony of the NCSJ will focus on the recent anti-semitic statements espoused by Communist Party officials in Russia. This sustained rhetoric has created a tense atmosphere and growing fear of anti-Semitism in an already precarious environment.

The situation requires a sustained response; a strong voice in support of democracy and civil freedoms and staunch opposition to those opposed to minority rights and freedoms.

This is a large task that requires the collective efforts of the U.S. Government and human rights organizations, as well as the Russian Government and its people.

The NCSJ is looking, as we also track the situation, it's something we call political anti-Semitism. That's a growing problem in the former Soviet Union, particularly in Russia.

Today as you noted, in Russia neo-Nazi, skinheads, and Fascist ideologists are increasingly committing violence against Jews and other ethnic minorities while spreading anti-Semitic propaganda. In 1998 alone, anti-Semitic incidents have included the beating of two Rabbis, the bomb-

ing of the Marina Roscha Synagogue for the second time in 2 years, neo-Nazi marches in central Moscow, and the desecration of several Jewish cemeteries.

We continue to support U.S. efforts to aid this region and believe that an active foreign policy is one of the best antidotes to growing political extremism and anti-Semitism in Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union.

We are grateful to the U.S. administration and congress for your actions of the last 2 months in condemning the Communist Party's attempt to rekindle anti-Semitism.

It should be noted that within the last several weeks members of Congress as well as the Administration, have communicated at the highest levels within the Russian Government to urge their condemnation of the recent Communist Party statements, particularly those of Mr. Zyuganov.

And Mr. Chairman, we support the Administration's decision not to have the Secretary of State meet with Mr. Zyuganov until he retracts his own statements as well as condemning those of his fellow Party members and doing something concrete to demonstrate that the Communist Party isn't trying to relight the fire of anti-Semitism in Russia. anti-Semitism has a deep-seated history in Russia. In Czarist times a Pale of Settlement created a boundary restricting Jews, pogroms were commonplace, and during the Soviet era we witnessed State policy, and unfortunately its firmly planted roots have allowed post-Soviet anti-Semitism to grow as the restraints on the Communist system were lifted.

Mr. Chairman, you mentioned General Makashov—as have some of my colleagues—Mr. Ilyukhin, Mr. Zyuganov. I won't repeat what's been said. What I would like to do though, is for the record, insert something that was sent to us just a few days ago to give you an example of what's happening outside of Moscow.

We've heard about Krasnodor and what their Governor continues to do. In a city in Krasnodor there was an appeal sent out throughout the streets. It was not a very nice appeal, Mr. Chairman. It reads as follows: "Dear citizens of Kuban, immediately, urgently, help save your flourishing Kuban from the damned, thrice damned Jew-Yids."

It goes on to say, "Smash their apartments, set their homes on fire! Let's begin gathering votes actively to move Mr. Kondratenko up to the Presidential post." It ends with, "The Yids will be destroyed. Victory will be ours!"

This was sent throughout Kuban and I firmly believe it wouldn't have happened without the encouragement of the local and regional government authorities, and in particular the Governor of Krasnodor.

Economic conditions in Russia have deteriorated, as has been noted. A fluctuating ruble, inflated consumer prices, unpaid wages and pensions plague Russian citizens. This chaotic economic condition coupled with an unstable political situation, make the future vastly uncertain and have prompted Russians to look for someone to blame—or at least some Russians. And unfortunately, a traditional choice in Russia has been the Jews.

Mr. Chairman, in summary, the Soviet Jewry movement has enjoyed many, many great achievements over the last few years and now is not the time to let a reactionary voice override these accomplishments—not just for Russian Jews but for all Russians.

It is critical that the Russian Government understand the importance of their commitment to human rights and the rule of law. It is critical that Russia develop the necessary infrastructure to support economic development, and guarantees law enforcement, and the protection of civil rights of all its citizens.

Finally, it is critical to advocate the prosecution of anyone, from common citizen to government official, who propagates ethnic hatred. The situation also requires continued U.S. Government leadership.

It is imperative that human rights organizations, with the assistance of our government, develop educational initiatives that foster pluralism and tolerance and support for human rights and democracy. Many think that this is an impossible task but I think the work that all of us have done through the Helsinki Commission, through the OSCE, shows that it isn't impossible and that we need to do this.

Some Western models for combating racism and ethnic hatred may be adapted to Russian communities as well. Such programs can encourage multi-cultural understanding and comprise a long-range strategy toward the eradication of anti-Semitism and ethnic hatred in Russia.

Mr. Chairman, the NCSJ has worked closely with the U.S. Government in many endeavors and we look forward to continuing to do so. We urge the U.S. Government to continue its efforts and work with other governments and international organizations to promote the development of democratic and pluralistic institutions and traditions.

The protection of minority rights, within the overarching goal of promoting human rights, is at the heart of this effort. Russia's successful development toward democracy depends on it.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, what I think all of us are concerned about is that the rhetoric that's been displayed over the last couple of months does not become a permanent part of the political discourse in Russia or any of these other countries. The continuing focus and condemnation is vital to ensure that this doesn't happen, and we look forward to working with the Commission to ensure that.

Thank you.

Mr. Smith. Thank you very much, Mr. Levin. Let me just say that the Commission will be going to St. Petersburg for the OSCEPA around July 6th. I plan on leading that delegation, and I can assure you that at the forefront of our statements and meetings with Russian officials will be to raise this issue to the highest possible level we can.

Anything that can be done in the meantime, will be done, but at least there will be a direct, face-to-face series of meetings with our counterparts—in the OSCE in general, but Russia in particular.

Mr. Satter said in his statement today that, "the threat to human rights today stems from Russia's pervasive lawlessness and the individual's total physical and moral vulnerability. As a direct result of the attempt to introduce capitalism quickly and without a moral and legal framework, a criminal business oligarchy arose in Russia."

I think that's a very profound statement. I happen to believe it's very true. What is the reaction though, or the relationship between this criminal business oligarchy and the politicians? Are they aligned with the reactionaries or are they going with where it gives them the best deal?

Are they the politicians? Are they on the same track? I mean, how do they feel about anti-Semitism? Are they looking to exploit it as well? What is their relationship?

We know that big money runs things in our country. When it's so underground and so pervasive, how does it run things in Russia?

Mr. Satter. Well, it's no longer underground. The underground emerged after the fall of Communism. The first accumulations of capital under Communism were in the black market, and when the Communist system fell apart black market operators were the people who had starting capital and were in a position to take advantage of the opportunities for absolutely unprecedented enrichment that presented themselves.

What has happened is that they have, in effect, privatized the government. The criminal elements in Russia—and I include not only the gangsters but the corrupt officials who are also criminals—have been able to use the government to facilitate their appropriation of the wealth that was created by the entire society.

As to your first question, what are their political views, they have none. They're concerned only with whatever will facilitate their self-enrichment and they don't evince any particular patriotism either.

The money that they accumulate is quickly sent out of the country to await the day when they will follow it to the West, assuming things in Russia really disintegrate as a result of their own predatory behavior.

The relationship to anti-Semitism or to the human rights situation in Russia is that as people become increasingly desperate in Russia as a result of the ruin of the economy, they look for someone to blame.

Based on my personal experience over many years, anti-Semitism is not virulent in Russia today. In fact, there's much more hostility on the popular level toward people from the Caucasus right now, and there's a certain amount of respect and admiration for Jews and a recognition of the fact that Jewish emigration has deprived Russia of doctors, teachers, scientists—people who made a very important contribution to society.

But people have become so desperate and their lives have become so miserable that the attempt of an unscrupulous—and mentally unbalanced in many cases—minority, to use anti-Semitism as an outlet for popular frustration, does meet with a certain amount of success.

So despite the fact that the popular attitude right now toward Jews is not all that negative, the efforts of people like Ilyukhin and Makashov to use anti-Semitism for their own purposes, may meet with some success, even though it is coming up against the barrier of the common sense of the Russian population.

There's one factor in all this that it's impossible to avoid mentioning which is, that some of the most prominent oligarchs and some of the people with the shadiest reputations, unfortunately are Jewish. Now, it is absolutely untrue that Jews in any way, differ in their behavior in this situation from other parts of the population.

And in fact there are, for every Jewish oligarch, or exploiter or thief, plenty of Russians who exhibit exactly the same type of behavior but with a little bit less success.

Nonetheless, the prominence of these people—and their names are well-known in Russia—plays into the hands of this racist and rabid minority, which would like to use anti-Semitism to distract people from the real problems in Russia.

Mr. Smith. Does General Makashov speak for the military? Because you know, you don't need a majority when you have the guns, and if the military or retired generals share a certain, uniform view—or do they?

Mr. Satter. I I've always been very suspicious of people who claim to know what the military is thinking in Russia—

Mr. Smith. I'm just asking. I don't know.

Mr. Satter. No, no, no. I realize you don't make that claim, but I mean, were I to make that claim I'd be suspicious of myself.

I think that among people who have been really hurt by the present situation, in an intolerant country with an intolerant tradition, there are people who will desperately look for someone to blame other than themselves. There are plenty of those people in the military, too.

But I'm not sure that the military is, for all of its brutality, which Ludmilla Alexeyeva talked about, particularly distinguished by its anti-Semitism compared to the rest of the population. In any case, I don't have that knowledge.

Mr. Smith. Yes, Mr. Naftalin.

Mr. Naftalin. Mr. Chairman, I agree with almost all of these points. I'd just like to make a slight correction of nuance, maybe.

Jews throughout the country experience the whole range of anti-Semitic behavior—whether it be in employment, whether it be in education, whether it be in going to local office to get a birth certificate and having to pay the so-called Jewish surtax.

It's a somewhat Moscow-centric view to suggest that anti-Semitism isn't all that bad. It's very bad. The public opinion polls show that if you ask in general, the question, do you believe in the basic anti-Semitic canard that there is a conspiracy among Jews to defeat Russia, fully 50 percent—even in Moscow which is the most liberal city—either say they believe it or say they're willing to consider that it might be true.

Now, that's it is true that if you compare anti-Semitism on the streets of Moscow to the ethnic cleansing campaign of the mayor, then it doesn't look so bad. But I don't want to leave the impression that it's not so bad. It's always a matter of, compared to what, I suppose.

Secondly, and this is another point, there are a number of Jewish oligarches, if we accept Hitler's definition of a Jew. A lot of oligarches have Jewish backgrounds: grandparents, whatever. Most of them are not what we would call Jews. They don't practice Judaism.

Berazovsky, for instance, who is one of the prototypes of this, has converted to Russian Orthodox. I'm sure his parents were Jewish. I don't think he considers himself Jewish.

And many of these oligarches don't even have both parents as Jews; a couple of them of course, have. But it's part of the anti-Semitic view that Jews are so prominent among the oligarches. They have to search ancestry to make them Jews.

Mr. Levin. Mr. Chairman, two quick comments. Related to the military, I think it's important to know what happened during the last election and whom the people in the military supported, because you asked a very good question: who in the army today, will follow which leader?

And it's unclear, but if you look at some of the polls that were taken after the last Presidential election it's not very encouraging that Mr. Zhironovsky and Mr. Zyuganov did very well among some parts of the rank and file.

And I think, given the conditions that they live under today, it shouldn't be too much of a stretch to imagine which type of candidate they may support, unless their concerns begin to be, not just addressed but resolved.

Second point related to the oligarches. Some of the oligarches are Jewish and openly identify themselves as Jewish, and have been singled out because of that. And I mentioned the Russian Jewish Congress a few minutes ago and some of their leadership have been in the forefront in trying to create a unified voice against Mr. Zyuganov and his allies in the Communist Party.

One in particular, Mr. Gusinsky, head of the Russian Jewish Congress, has worked with the European Parliament and with the Knesset in Israel to have resolutions passed condemning Mr. Zyuganov's recent statements and actions.

The other point is that this is a small group of people who have a large impact on the greater Jewish population in Russia. And we shouldn't forget that because the actions of a few are having a tremendous impact overall.

Jews throughout Russia, let alone the other successor states, live with a history that some of the other ethnic and religious minorities don't, and doesn't take much as today's conditions prove, to see negative views reappear quickly.

Mr. Smith. Mr. Uzzell.

Mr. Uzzell. Yes, Mr. Chairman, a couple of points. First on the issue of corruption. I think there's a temptation for us Americans—I know my friend David Satter does not fall into this temptation—to think of corruption as something that affects the elite while the populace as a whole is untouched by corruption; that we could achieve reform if only we could somehow liberate the virtuous people from the corrupt elite.

One of the depressing realities that one experiences if one has lived for 6 years in Moscow, is this: anybody who has taught in Moscow—I know several Americans who have taught at all levels of the school system—will tell you that if you're giving an exam you cannot walk out of the room for one minute because all of the kids will cheat; whether they're elementary school students or university students.

I've lectured to young Russian journalists about the ethics of journalism, about not accepting a bribe for writing an article, and they react with a combination of astonishment and pity for my American naivete; that I think that it would be possible to construct a system in which journalists do not routinely accept payments for stories.

That's depressing to point out but I think it means that the task is even harder than one might think if one just looks at the elite.

Secondly, on the problem of anti-Semitism. Mayor Luzhkov of Moscow, who might be the next president of Russia, gives us a kind of crude barometer of public opinion. He is an utterly opportunistic person. If it were in his political interests to embrace anti-Semitism publicly he would do so.

If it were in his political interests to oppose the ethnic cleansing of the so-called chornye, the blacks—by which in Russia is meant not Africans but darker-skinned people from the south; mostly of Islamic background—if it were in his political interests to do so he would oppose that. Instead, he's leading it that ethnic cleansing, encouraging Moscow's police to harass and expel the chornye. He's one of the leading practitioners of playing to anti-Southern prejudice in Russia.

I would suggest that we should react to the recent, shocking statements, by Russian politicians, not just tactically but strategically. We have a good tactical reaction in the excellent work of the Union of Councils and the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

But maybe the strategic question to ask is this: What ethnic group or groups in Russia today occupy a position most like that of the position that the Jews occupied in Germany in the 1930s?

If massive persecution of a scapegoat minority were to begin tomorrow, what minority would that be? It might be the Jews. But, going out on a limb, I would predict that it won't be the Jews, it won't be the Roman Catholics, it won't be the American Protestant missionaries.

Not because those groups are not hated. In fact, they're all hated more today than they were a year ago. But it would be the groups that don't have people to speak up for them in the West.

It would be groups like the Old Believers, a religious minority that exists only in Russia and in those countries that faith has been brought to by Russian emigres, or Muslims who are suffering more under the new religion law than Protestants are.

In the deep South of Russia, in Stavropol, the police broke up a Muslim worship service that was meeting in a private apartment. That so far, has not happened to any Christian group or to any Jewish group of which I know. I think that sort of thing ought to be an international incident.

So in the spirit of Martin Niemoller who said, "First they came for the Jews and I did not speak up because I am not Jewish. Then they came for the Communists. I did not speak up because I was not a Communist," I think we should go out of our way to keep our antennae sensitive to those religious groups that have the fewest allies abroad.

Mr. Smith.: Believing that Yeltsin is truly in his twilight, what are the pressure points? We have heard the argument that if we are too vocal there would be a reactionary element, in the Duma especially, that they would exploit it for their own good, saying here they are again, telling us what to do.

What should we be doing? What statements need to be made, or what contacts need to be made? Mr. Uzzell, you mentioned that the farther out in the country one goes, the more likely that there will be some distance from the—it seems that what was the reform engine in Moscow has become the engine of regression. At least that is one take.

Should we be meeting with some of these Governors and leaders from these different provinces in Russia? Do we need to have more of a plan than we do? It seems to be hit or miss right now. Everything, as I said earlier, is just Yeltsin this, Yeltsin that, rather than spreading out our arms and reaching out to others to try to engage in dialog.

Mr. Uzzell. I think it is worthwhile to engage in dialog at every level, Mr. Chairman, and I would encourage more direct contact with the provinces.

Mr. Smith. In what order? Which provinces would you say should be prioritized right now?

Mr. Uzzell. Those provinces that are up for grabs. In a sense, I think I would spend less time in a place like Nizhni Novgorod or Samara, which is already in reform reformist hands. [See Appendix on page 52.]

There's a certain tendency for American visitors to like to travel to the places that are show places of reform and whose Governors deserve great credit for that fact. Nevertheless, it is probably more useful to travel, neither to those places nor to the places like Ulyanovsk which are absolute strongholds of reaction and are not going to be moved by Western influence.

But instead one should visit the places that are on the margin, that are up for grabs, that could go either way. I'm fascinated when I talk to local officials dealing in Church/State relations. I could take some things that some local officials have said to me, quote them out of context and make them seem like absolute Fascists.

I could take other things that those same officials have said and quote them out of context and make them seem like Thomas Jefferson. They contradict themselves. They have not come to a clear, consistent understanding themselves of what Church/State relations ought to be, which means an opportunity for us to engage those officials in dialog at every level.

I find they often ask me questions about how similar questions of Church/State relations are handled in America. I think it is telling that the opponents of religious freedom have distributed misinformation, disinformation, about Church/State relations in America, and the more we can just engage those local officials into a dialog to help set the record straight the more I think we can, perhaps very slowly, move the ball forward.

Mr. Levin. Mr. Chairman, this is something that I have had a personal interest in for a long time, and think individually and as well as through our organization we have urged our government to look at ways of getting direct and indirect assistance out to the various regions and local areas, and if necessary, bypass the regional and local government entities when possible.

Depending on where you go, it may or may not be possible to work with them. This is a very long and arduous journey, but we should look at the best ideas that we have used in Eastern Europe and in other places in the world and see if it fits into a Russian model.

It may, it may not. Nevertheless, as Larry said, we have to get out beyond the large cities and we have to get, not just our organizations but many others; those that provide direct assistance and training to places that haven't been exposed. Or maybe they've been exposed to the wrong types of ideas and there needs to be a balance.

And it is my sense that it is beginning to happen slowly but it needs to be accelerated.

Mr. Smith. Yes?

Mr. Naftalin. I agree with his point. Mr. Chairman, the problem is that the power ministries in the West do not engage in any constructive policymaking discussions with the grassroots leaders who understand what is going on.

You would not have had a Ponzi scheme going on for 7 years in Russia if you had asked the least-active human rights worker in Russia, because everybody understood what was going on. But it is the nature of diplomacy to only meet with your opposite. It's in the nature of being in the Congress, even, to meet with other members of the Duma and whatever. What needs to happen is to create venues to let the human rights leadership—and especially the human rights leadership in the provinces—become involved in the development and thinking about policies and responses; whether it is AID programs or whether it is political programs, or even whether it is the advanced work of with whom should the Secretary of State meet.

I'll give you a simple example. We have this project that is supported by AID. I think it is the first actual, literal grassroots human rights project ever supported by AID. It is a partnership between the Union of

Councils, the very distinctive junior partner, and the Moscow Helsinki Group headed by Ludmilla, who is very much the senior partner—even if she weren't here I would say that.

Among other things, the key to this project is the organization of work with the provincial NGOs in 30 different provinces of Russia. Now, that creates a collection of people that should be talked with in a meaningful way, and we would all be happy to help structure it and facilitate it. Those people have real ideas about the questions you are asking, and it seems to me that there has to be a way to involve them.

But it is primarily the people there that need to help organize a way for realistic, constructive, thoughtful and innovative discussions about what is going on in the country and what role the West should play and so forth—how can we help with the support, who do we talk to, who do we do not talk to.

It's never been easy to do that, but I think we have completely ignored it in recent years, largely because there has been a sense that nothing should be designed that might embarrass Yeltsin, and for good reason, because Yeltsin is in a precarious position, and he is the best democrat we have got.

But the problem is that he is not in charge of the whole country. Never was. No president could be. We have to at some point, try to understand the principles involved and not just access to the players.

There are mechanisms, but there has to be a will on the part of the State Department, particularly, and AID and the Congress, whatever—I don't have to preach this to the Helsinki Commission—the Helsinki institution is the one institution that understands this but nobody else really understands how to have an effective dialog that could be helpful at the policy level and not just showing the flag—which is also important for the dissidents.

They need support too, just by showing the flag. But beyond showing the flag and being symbolic, they have real ideas and nobody hears about them. I think this is a great tragedy and it is part of the economic failure.

Because if you think about it for one minute, there is even a question of mafias. There are always going to be mafias in the world. We have mafias here. I remember I read an article from 100 years ago that said the mafia is good for you if you live in Atlantic City because if the mafia is running the crime, people will be better protected.

Well, that is what it is in Russia. Part of the reason you have a mafia is there is no law to enforce. So if you are a businessman or a bank and you would like to have your civil contract enforced, you'd better get yourself a mafia to go enforce it because there is no law in the world and no court that will enforce it.

So even the absence of a human rights type rule of law leads to a mafia, even if there were not the obvious need to make money, which you are going to have anyway. But you have an institutional bias in favor of mafias as long as you do not have laws.

Mr. Smith. You just mentioned how the 5-year trend has been toward lawlessness and that less freedom of religion will exist one year from now. You talked about the empire striking back.

It seems like a tourniquet is needed. In addition to everything that has been said, what can be done to—I mean, the IMF right now is giving money hand-over-fist to try to save Russia from bankruptcy. I mean, do they have a role in this? It's as if we've become so preoccupied

economically with what's happening in Brazil and China—and Japan certainly, with its economic problems—that Russia has been off the radar screens for far too long, and all these things have just crept up on us.

You're right, and I do appreciate that. The Helsinki Commission is a bipartisan Commission—has known it but we're only a few members of the House and Senate and staff.

Mr. Naftalin, one additional question. You talked about the Procurator General being given information that you asked that he act on. What kind of specific things has he failed to act on? Complaints of vandalism, of things—desecrations?

Mr. Naftalin. Well, he failed to act on anything any of us would like him to act on. Starting with Nikitin, he should have nolle prossed the case 3 years ago, going to every human rights issue that comes up.

I mean, as somebody—I think it was Ludmilla—described the system, at every level there is a lawless. There will never be a consequence for any kind of anti-human rights act; whether it's an act of anti-Semitism or any other act.

The local police decide they have a crime to solve, and they have an accused that they've picked up. They put them together. It doesn't matter if they have anything to do with each other. Then they go to jail and then they go to the next level of court and all the way up.

The Procurator General has an opportunity, you would think, to intervene and set some standards for the way in which the police and the prosecutor work at the lower levels. Well, there's no way.

So all these cases, there are dozens, hundreds, scores of cases promoting ethnic hatred. This is against the law there. They never look into these cases.

Mr. Smith. Let me just ask you on that, and maybe AID, we can ask them, and the State Department if they have an answer. Well all know that prosecutors have prosecutorial discretion. On a list of action items of what they can take action on they pick what they want.

If we do indeed, have an up and running rule of law program with the Procurator General and with his people, are we trying to encourage them to pick up these cases and run with them and try to set an example on human rights for others? It is worth asking and finding out.

Mr. Naftalin. I think it is a good point but remember that even in a case as universally visible as Nikitin where it was clearly within the power of the Prosecutor General in Moscow to tell his people in St. Petersburg plus the KGB, drop this case, it is a loser. It is bogus. It is political.

Even our government does not really go very far into interfering. They say well, this is the judicial system of a foreign country, whatever.

You know, if we cannot get them to do something as obvious as that when the whole world is looking, it is going to be hard to get them to be responsive to all these other issues that are probably in the long run more important, but each individual case is much harder to make a symbol of.

But I think you are right, Mr. Chair. Prosecutors, not only do they have the discretion that a prosecutor has anywhere, but in Russia it is worse. They control the judges, you know, and they work with the KGB. So, this is endemic stuff.

You really have to, I think, start with who's in charge? Is the Prime Minister in charge? Is the President in charge? Is there any way you can get them to make these things priorities and clean up the system?

Nobody's figured that out yet and I think in the short run, the most important thing that could be done is to support and strengthen the human rights advocacy and monitoring community that's going about trying to teach local people how to stand up for their rights.

I mean, without that there's no—and educating people about their rights, there will be no public support for what we're trying to do. People are so depressed by that they don't believe that it could be solved.

And there's no voting constituency for cleaning it up. The only constituency there is, is the West, and that's not a very strong constituency especially when you've got the worst people in charge in the Duma.

So it is—it's kind of like you're looking for where to put the tourniquet. But I think that we have to try—if we believe in democracy at all then we have to support at the local level, at the grassroots level, ways of educating and empowering local people to learn what their rights ought to be in a civil society and give them ammunition to defend themselves and fight for their rights.

I think that's No. 1 and it's the last thing that we do. It's the last thing. AID will give money to, you know, training—some kind of—I don't know what the judges or law schools or this or that, but they don't get down to the basics.

Mr. Smith. Mr. Uzzell?

Mr. Uzzell. Can I comment?

Mr. Smith. Please.

Mr. Uzzell. I think we're running into the limits of what realistically can be done from abroad. Ten years ago, 15 years ago, it was possible to advance the cause of liberating Russia by giving Stinger missiles to guerrillas in Afghanistan.

And 8 or 10 years ago it was possible to advance the cause of liberating that part of the world by giving fax machines to democratic activists in Lithuania and Ukraine and also in Russia itself.

But the dominant political fact of today's Russia is corruption. I predict a Latin American model. I don't think we're going to see the apocalyptic return of Stalinism, but for the next generation Russia is going to continue to be a stagnant, semi-authoritarian, corrupt—but not nightmare—state.

What was the United States able to do from abroad for most of the 20th century about improving corruption in Latin America? There is no magic bullet, there is no equivalent of a Stinger missile or sending in a fax machine.

I think groups like the National Endowment for Democracy have, perhaps unconsciously, been looking for the Russian version of Konrad Adenauer. They are hoping to find the brilliant Russian statesman who is going to liberate Russia and turn it into a functioning democratic polity the way Konrad Adenauer did to Germany in the 1950s, and then will subsidize him.

That effort was probably doomed to failure to begin with. We don't know enough about the different players and about the indirect consequences of what we're doing.

For example, the 1993 Constitution, although it has excellent provisions on religious freedom, is in general not a good Constitution. It is far too Presidential, far too centralized, far too anti-parliamentary, extremely unbalanced by Western parliamentary standards..

And yet, our Russian friends who were pro-Yeltsin, pro-West, pro-market reform, all wanted this centralized Constitution. Programs of the National Endowment for Democracy indirectly ended up subsidizing the campaign for a Constitution, which was Boris Yeltsin's personal Constitution—custom-made, tailor-made for his political interests.

I think that getting to a law-governed, truly free society in Russia is going to be a long process. We're not going to see an *annus mirabilis*—a year of miracles like 1989 or 1990. It's going to take decades. It depends mostly on the Russians themselves but there are some things we can do.

I continue to believe in linkage. Many have criticized the Smith Amendment, which tied American aid to the Russian Government through the issue of religious freedom. Nevertheless, the Smith Amendment had an effect. When the Russian Government knew that there were potential real world consequences to their violations of human rights, that had an effect on their behavior.

And while I don't think we should have a meat ax approach of cutting off all aid to the Russian Government when we're not cutting off all aid to the government of Uzbekistan where the situation is much worse, nevertheless I think we should continue to look for opportunities for linkage and continue to communicate, both by word and deed, that if the Russians continue to violate their own Constitution which they freely passed, then we are going to see to it that there is the possibility and perhaps the reality, of real world, painful consequences.

Mr. Levin. Mr. Chairman, I agree with much of what has been said but I want to add that I think we're all partly optimists at the table. And while we're confronting very serious and difficult problems we have covered a great distance.

I think in some cases we sometimes lose sight of that and the opportunities that are presented and what we as individuals, let alone our organizations, can now do in some of these countries, Russia included. This is a very long process and there has to be a long-term commitment.

I think Larry is 100 percent correct when he says that Russians are going to have to solve their own problems. We can provide guidance and hopefully the right type of assistance, but in the end it's going to fall to the Russians, Ukrainians, Uzbeks themselves, to decide what type of society that they want to live in.

I think we also have to recognize that there are some positive elements within the Russian Government. There may not be many but who would have thought that the head of state would have come out and condemned the remarks of Mr. Zyuganov the way that President Yeltsin did?

Now, there are many other areas that we can call him on the carpet for but I think we have to recognize some of the positives as well as all of the problems, including the role played by NGOs as well as our own government.

I think our government has been pushing in many of the right places but more needs to be done. There needs to be a greater focus. Our focus is elsewhere in the world today but I think we're going to need to re-energize our efforts within the successor states now.

Mr. Smith. Let me just ask one final question and ask any of my colleagues if they have any questions. As you all know, Secretary Albright is making her way over to Moscow at the end of the month.

In addition to your testimonies which are extensive and I think very thorough, comprehensive, and enlightening, is there anything else that you think that she should do? You know, if you were advising her, you had her ear and you were whispering in her ear?

Because I do think we're at a point where this—particularly this anti-Semitism situation could very quickly go to critical, like cancer. You know, if you don't catch it early it spreads through the body and it doesn't take much sickness and infection to completely pollute the body of the Russian people, especially when the people who are in charge have the guns.

So if there's—first, Mr. Satter, do you want to begin?

Mr. Satter. It's a difficult task because what I feel is necessary is a complete reorientation of American policy. The underlying problem which has led to this appearance of anti-Semitism and to some of the other problems that we've talked about, is the complete absence of rule of law in Russia.

And that absence of rule of law goes back to the very philosophy of the reform period which we very uncritically, and I must say, without much knowledge, supported; the idea that if you changed the economic structures of society everything else would take care of itself.

That by the way, is a Marxist proposition and it's the reverse side of the view of the Communists, that if you just abolish private property everything will take care of itself. The young reformers who were themselves, former Marxist ideologues, simply turned the proposition on its head.

They said well, you destroy what the Communists did and everything will be fine. In fact, economic transformation on the scale they were proposing could not have had any other result than a criminal takeover of the country, if it were carried out without rule of law and without respect for universal morality.

With our uncritical support for the so-called young reformers whom we erroneously identified with democracy we facilitated that development which has now led to the rebirth of the Communist opposition at a time when it had been discredited totally, as well as all the attendant dangerous phenomena—including anti-Semitism, racism of other types, violence, and the danger of epidemics in Russia.

So unfortunately if you were to ask me what I would tell the Secretary of State, I would tell her that the time has come to look at the entire policy toward Russia from the very beginning, and try to understand why it was misconceived philosophically and what has to be done in order for it to be more relevant to the real nature of the situation. There is, as has been pointed out by my fellow panelists, an important role for the West to play.

Because Russia is so weak internally and so confused morally, the influence of the West becomes very important, because it is one source of moral influence that exists. But that influence is just squandered if

all we do is uncritically back people whose true background we do not understand, whose policies we have not thought about, whose actions inspire the justified resentment of nearly the entire population.

Mr. Uzzell. I would mention three cases publicly and one privately. Publicly I would mention Stavropol, which I have already touched on; where Muslims being denied rights that Christians and Jews currently are not yet being denied.

Second would be Tartarstan, which I did not mention earlier. This province on the mid-Volga was the scene of what was probably the greatest violation of religious freedom in the last year in Russia. The President of Tartarstan did a Henry VIII interfering directly into the internal decisionmaking of a religious confession, purging a head of that religious confession who was not to his liking, and substituting a new head who is essentially a puppet of the secular government of Tartarstan. In this case the confession is the Muslims. Nevertheless, if we really believe in religious freedom then it is just as outrageous as it would be if the victims had been Christian or Jewish.

Third, the Old Believers. Right on Old Square opposite the Kremlin is the Church of Kazan, restored in 1993; a gem of 17th Century Russian Orthodox Church architecture. The dark side of this restoration story is that the church now has a bell in its bell tower that had always been the property of the Old Believers, which split from the mainstream Russian Orthodox Church in the 17th Century.

This bell was confiscated by the Communists. It has now been “returned” to the Moscow Patriarchate, which was never its rightful owner. Mayor Luzhkov and the church have both refused to take any steps to correct this injustice.

I think we should show that we are concerned about the rights of indigenous, Russian religious minorities and not just American missionaries.

Privately, I would mention the Constitutional Court case. A group of Protestant congregations are filing an appeal before the Russian Constitutional Court—very roughly, the equivalent of our Supreme Court—challenging the constitutionality of the 1997 law.

My sources in Moscow tell me that appeal has been put on a slow track and the earliest that the Constitutional Court will consider it is the middle of the year 2000.

Mr. Smith. Would you yield on that point? One issue we did raise with Yeltsin’s top echelon of people when we were visiting a year ago was one, do not enforce it, but second, join in that lawsuit—or at least, a lawsuit.

Is there any indication that the Yeltsin government is in any way, supportive of that challenge?

Mr. Uzzell. There was, and now there is not.

Mr. Smith. OK.

Mr. Uzzell. Up to 6 months ago I would have said that on that particular point you were having an effect, but maybe it is time for you to visit again and remind them. Because it seems that what looked as if it were going to be on a fast track is now on a slow track.

Mr. Naftalin. At the macro level, first I would dearly love to have you just put my name on the statement David Satter just made. I would be happy to accept every word that he said.

I think who did it is partly the Ivy League economists who helped them write that Constitution. It is all the advisors and the bankers and the business people and whatever.

So I would say that when—at the macro level, if we could get the Secretary of State and the White House to do a serious evaluation of what went wrong and what we can do, it is just vital who gets to come and talk about it. Because if it is the same old crowd you will get many defensive answers.

Now, at the micro level I would hope that Secretary of State Albright when she communicates all these concerns. Nevertheless, with respect to the anti-Semitism issue and the human rights in general, I think she needs to make a public display of not meeting with the Communist leadership, and she needs also to have a private display of meeting with Primakov.

Primakov is their guy. He is not Yeltsin's guy. He is their guy. I notice that he gets his budget through that Communist and Fascist Duma. So he is their guy so maybe he is the guy that she has to say, listen, well maybe you privately believe that the Jews are in charge of the world.

If you do then you should do something if you want any more money. You had better do something about cleaning up your anti-Semitic, Fascist, anti-human rights act and you're the guy who can do it.

And by the way, do something simple like Nikitin first of all, because you can do that with a flourish of a pen, and that will send us a signal that you got my message, and then make some statements yourself that will start to muzzle these people who have let the genie out of the bottle.

And have given the Russian public—admittedly a small percentage—but a small percentage of hard-core anti-Semites who believe they've been given the authority to privatize action—not just thinking the words but action—needs to be put back in the bottle, needs to be controlled.

And Primakov's the guy, because he is in charge and he is their guy. He is their leader and he ought to prove somehow that he is more of a leader of the country than Zyuganov. I think that is what Madeleine Albright's message ought to be, and I am not sure if that is high on her agenda or not.

We understand maybe it is and maybe it is not. We are waiting for some clarification as to just how these issues line up in her list of priorities for her meeting. We do not know that.

Mr. Smith. When she does appear before our committee, which probably will be after that trip, the full International Relations Committee and I sit as Chairman of the International Opportunity and Rights Committee, I will ask her that question.

And we will also send her a letter raising these issues and trying succinctly to summarize what all of your recommendations were, and hopefully she and her advisors will take it under advisement and do it.

It seems—much of this seems to be no-brainers. I mean, this should be—and maybe she is going to do it anyway. Nevertheless, we need to let her know that not only do we want her to do it but she's going to be asked about it repeatedly.

Mr. Levin?

Mr. Levin. Mr. Chairman, it is our hope that there will be symbolic as well as substantive steps taken. One has already been, and I think that is the announcement that she will not meet with Mr. Zyuganov.

I think what else is important symbolically—and we would ask her to do this in her schedule in Moscow—is to have a public forum that—with the appropriate human rights and religious community activists, to demonstrate the United States' resolve and commitment.

But it would be important for her to be joined by an appropriate Russian Government official, to stand side-by-side and send out a positive message. It is our hope that in addition a substantive step would be private discussions to make recommendations about inviting in or listening to the appropriate human rights and religious groups, to develop concrete programs to deal with tolerance and pluralism and the protection of ethnic and religious minority rights.

These are easy things that can be done but there needs to be a combination of public and private efforts.

Mr. Naftalin. Mr. Chairman, could I add a footnote?

Mr. Smith. Please.

Mr. Naftalin. What is so important about the human rights monitoring project that AID and NED have supported and that Ludmilla heads and that we are a partner to, is what made it happen. It is a remarkable step forward in human rights that 2 years ago President Yeltsin created a system of local, provincial, official human rights commissions. That is the group that this study is designed to influence, working with their local NGOs.

I think the President needs—President Yeltsin needs, in the context of this discussion publicly, he needs public accolades—from the Secretary of State and from our President for that matter—for his commitment to human rights in that respect, his speaking out about Fascism and anti-Semitism recently.

He needs to be up on that stage getting applause for that from them, and helping to stiffen his resolve and letting other leaders in his government know that this is what we appreciate. I think it will be—after all, he is the President of the country. They cannot very well complain if we applaud him.

Mr. Smith. Mr. Baron. Thank you very much.

Mr. Baron. Thank you. I think we have heard much interesting testimony that gives us much food for thought for the future as we look at this, and I hope that much of this will be taken note of by Secretary Albright as she prepares for her trip and as the State Department prepares for that.

One thing that we haven't talked a lot about, to change the subject a little bit, is the shooting of Galina Starovoitova. I would be interested in what conclusions you draw from the shooting itself, from the strong expressions by the Russian people against that shooting.

But also by the fact that at least to the best of my knowledge, there does not seem to be progress in even solving that crime. What conclusions would you draw from that sequence of events? Thank you.

Mr. Naftalin. I was there when it happened. I was in Moscow when it happened. She was killed in Petersburg. We were just getting ready to start the orientation of our study and I was with many of her close friends.

I have to say, No. 1, that we will never be able to separate that from the rest of this period of this month. It was almost like this was the punctuation mark that said, in case you wonder whether we mean business with all of our rhetoric, we are going to let you know that in an absolutely—there have been other assassinations of Russian leaders but

none compares to this in terms of it being a pure, political assassination of a person who was the leader of the pack, that was complaining about the Dumas' support of Makashov and so forth.

There are other reasons. She was trying to clean up corruption and the mafia in St. Petersburg and so forth. But she was a symbol of the democratic reform and the pro-Jewish movements, even though she was not Jewish herself.

So this was a punctuation mark. I do not know how better to say it. In the midst of all the rhetoric in other words that was expanding, in case you were wondering whether we are going to allow you now to act out your hostilities, we are going to show you how to do it: bang.

It seems to me that is it. It is not likely they will find the murderer; they never do. I want to say to you that 2 days before she was killed there was a group of KGB agents on television claiming that they had been ordered in February by their superiors in the KGB/FSB, to murder Berazovsky.

That's another part of this subject. Some people questioned whether it was true or not. It is hard for me to understand why they would have said it if it is not true and why wouldn't it be true? I do not know.

But Berazovsky, even though he is a Russian Orthodox now, I understand, is the quintessential head of the Jewish international conspiracy from the point of view that he is crazy.

So one day in that week—at the beginning of the month they are refusing to censure the Fascists. Then at the beginning of the week it becomes clear that they were going to—talked about assassinating the head of the Jewish conspiracy, so to speak. And then in case you missed it, we are going to kill Galina.

And of course I cannot tell you the number of people who are human rights leaders who happen to be Jewish, who told me they never believed they would be worried about their personal safety and now they are thinking about leaving.

So they were so afraid because of that week, to be specific. I mean, it was a terribly demoralizing—more than any we can remember.

Mr. Uzzell. I thought I knew Galina Starovoitova well. She was the second leading opponent of the repressive 1997 law on religion within the Russian Parliament. I interviewed her many times. I have been a dinner guest in her apartment.

There's one thing I did not know about her until after her death. Three years before she was killed, very quietly—one might almost say secretly—she was baptized into the Russian Orthodox Church and was became a practicing Orthodox Christian. But that fact was not known, even to people who thought they knew her well.

You have to have lived in Russia to know how unusual that is. Russia is a place today where politicians wear their religiosity on their sleeves. It is a country with a spiritual and ideological vacuum, and the most readily available source of symbols and slogans to fill that vacuum is the Russian Orthodox faith.

And so the country is full of pseudo-Orthodoxy. It is full of politicians who don't even know how to cross themselves correctly in the Orthodox fashion. Nevertheless, who go into churches and seek photo opportunities with politicians. Galina Starovoitova was just the opposite.

She was somebody whose life was deeply influenced by her faith but who did not make a show of it. Her assassination is a signal that certain circles, in their vision of Russia, have no room for the kind of basic human decency that she represented.

Mr. Satter. I also knew Galina Starovoitova quite well. It is worth pointing out that what generally happens when a prominent person is murdered in Russia is that the President announces he is taking the investigation under his personal control. This is a guarantee that absolutely nothing will happen.

The newspapers are then filled with various “versions,” as they put it, of why the person was killed. We now have three, four, maybe even five versions of why Galina Starovoitova was killed.

The fact is, we will probably never know, but this again, is a reflection of the fact that no crime, no matter how horrendous, invokes any type of meaningful reaction from the Russian authorities.

And Galina may have been the most tragic of the victims, although I think it is hard to distinguish between murder victims. Perhaps she was the most prominent recent victim. But there have been many other high profile murders, none of which have been solved, none of which has provoked any really meaningful attempt to solve them.

Instead, we are left with a fog of versions which are put out through various corrupt channels and which confuse people and often discredit the victim. This situation is symbolic of the way the dividing line—the essential line between legal and illegal behavior, between moral and immoral behavior—is steadily being erased in Russia so that no permanent standards, no permanent commitments are possible in the society.

Someone can be killed, disappear, nothing is done about it and it is taken for granted that nothing is going to be done about it.

Mr. Smith. Mr. Finerty. Thank you, Mr. Baron.

Mr. Finerty. Thank you. Larry, I just have a quick question going all the way back to the beginning of your testimony. You mentioned that actually as a result of the law, missionaries—foreign missionaries—are not suffering, whereas local religious minorities are.

I just wonder if you have any idea why that is; whether these local officials are worried about reaction in the West, or is there sort of a modus operandi between the missionaries who have been there a while? Or why do you think that is?

Mr. Uzzell. I don't have any doubt that it is because they are worried about reaction in the West, just as in general, Catholics have suffered less than Protestants—although you can find local exceptions to that.

It's not because Catholicism is less hated than Protestantism. There is a more deep-rooted ancestral hatred of Catholicism than there is of Protestantism because there has been more direct contact with Catholicism. When people think of the Time of Troubles and the occupation of Moscow by the Polish army they are very conscious of the fact that it was a Catholic army.

But if you attack a single Catholic parish you have the Vatican to contend with. It is a unified, worldwide organization with a billion members; many of whom live in countries with which Moscow values good relations.

It's much easier to go after an independent Pentecostal congregation. It is also striking that the most Protestant of Protestants—those Protestants that are Congregationalist in their doctrine of church gover-

nance that have completely independent congregations not part of any nationwide structure—they suffer more than those Protestants that are part of organizations like the Baptist Union.

Mr. Smith. Just one final question. My sense is that we are no longer at a crossroads. We are down the wrong road and we have been down it for a number of years and it can only get worse if enough attention is not paid, and hopefully the Russians actually help themselves.

The status or the role that the Press plays in terms of manipulation, censorship, their control by the government, both in Moscow and outside—and Larry you have made—put much emphasis on that we really have to realize that there are disparate issues out there that are much different than what they are within the confines.

Are they partners of repression now or are they relatively free? When it comes to anti-Semitism for example, are they just aiding and abetting and maybe even aiding big-time, this rising tide of anti-Semitism? What is their role?

Mr. Uzzell. Typically they are partners of the local political elite. The local media, the provincial media, have become more important than ever. It is difficult to get a copy of the influential Moscow dailies if you are out in a provincial capital 1000 miles away. There is far less freedom of Press at that level than there was a few years ago.

If the local Governor, as in Samara, is pro-religious freedom, then the Press will be pro-religious freedom, and if he's pro-repression then the Press will be pro-repression. The cases of there being a really robust, independent, local Press as there is in Vologda, north of Moscow, are increasingly rare.

Mr. Smith. Let us ask Mark. Perhaps you might want to comment on this, or Mr. Naftalin. Remember when the anti-Zionist committees were formed and we used to see these terrible caricatures used to inflame and incite? Are the Press carrying those ugly pictures? Are they on the rise?

Mr. Levin. Some in the media are tools of various political parties and individuals, and carry the worst of anti-Semitic, anti-Western—you name it, it is in their publications. You can go on almost any street corner in Moscow and some other cities at a newsstand and pick up this horrible material.

There are courageous journalists; some are in Russia. If you look at the national media, many media outlets are controlled by conglomerates that are, in turn, controlled by the oligarches. I think it has been our experience that how they cover Zyuganov, Makashov, and the others depends on who controls the outlet.

NTV is owned by Vladimir Gusinsky and he has covered the issue very openly, as well as some other issues; most notably what was going on in other parts of Russia. His company was called The Task.

Could more be done? Absolutely. I mean, one thing that we have been pushing for is the utilization of mass media to counter the messages that the Communists and Nationalists are trying to have filter through Russian society. It is our hope that those with some sense of responsibility will continue to counter the hateful messages that this Red-Brown coalition continues to perpetuate.

Mr. Satter. I just want to add one brief comment. That this kind of hate propaganda needs to be answered. I think the United States needs to support efforts to answer it. But the underlying problem must also be

addressed. The way to end this outbreak of anti-Semitism is to do something about the conditions that are creating the tension in Russian society.

We have to somehow drain the swamp in which all of these putrescent outgrowths are appearing and flourishing, and they will die, too.

In the meantime, obviously, all of the steps which we've talked about and some of my fellow panelists have suggested, are very appropriate. But we are not going to solve the global problem here. Because as long as Russian society is in a state of extreme crisis, anti-Semitism and other harmful phenomena are going to be difficult to combat and to eliminate.

Mr. Levin. The need to address the fundamental problems will hopefully alleviate those that are attached to these problems. And I think things that we continue to take for granted in the United States and in the West and figure we can take our model and just transpose it to that part of the world, I think we sometimes are deluding ourselves.

Mr. Smith. I want to thank our very distinguished panelists. Your testimony has been outstanding, insightful, chock full of wisdom and we do appreciate it. The ideas will get the widest dissemination possible through our hearing record, through the transcripts even before it's reduced to a hearing record.

We also will be in touch with the Administration and will, as succinctly as possible and as accurately as possible, convey your recommendations; especially for the upcoming trip. Thankfully, some Administration personnel have been here, hopefully taking good notes, and all of us benefiting from your wisdom.

And I do thank you for your generosity of your time because this hearing has run a little late. But time is needed to get or obtain understanding. You certainly are helping me and my colleagues. I have a greater understanding of where we go from here.

Thank you very much.

(Whereupon, the hearing was concluded at 1:24 p.m.)

APPENDICES

TRANSCRIPT OF VIDEOTAPE

OCT. 4, 1998—MOSCOW*

A. Makashov: . . . In event of my death or the death of my brothers in arms, I'll take ten of those Yids with me—from a list of them—to the other world. We're not going to just give up.

B. Commentator: . . . Whom he had in mind exactly was unclear; he was more clear about events that transpired 5 years ago. At that time, the armed uprising of the opposition was unsuccessful, according to Makashov, because of the betrayal of the generals. Today, he again called upon the army to rise up in defense of socialism. The leader of the attack on Ostankino (TV station) let us know that he is ready for new blood. Makashov declared that every night he gets threatening phone calls, but he said he is not afraid.

C. Makashov: Yeltsin—out of here! And as for the other perestroika types and reformers, I repeat, we'll have a trial according to law and take them out to the execution spot on Red Square, but we won't just flog them, we'll do worse.

D. Commentator: As the rally continued, the speakers got more enflamed. More and more, they called the upcoming All-Russian protest action an "uprising."

OCT. 7, 1998—SAMARA**

E. Commentator: . . . The rally in Samara was indistinguishable from those in other cities in Russia, except for the participation of Duman Deputy and retired general Albert Makashov. His speech this time was devoted neither to Yeltsin nor to the government, nor to the people but to television.

F. Makashov: For the past three days, all you can hear on TV is the piggish whistle,—no, wait—a pig is a nobler animal than those [people] on TV—the snakish hissing concerning my speech on Oct. 4.

G. Commentator: Makashov assumes that TV intentionally deleted from his October 4 speech a series of revelations, as a result of which, the meaning of the general's words was distorted. The general's thoughts on reconstructing Russia have been aired before, and their repetition on Kuybyshev Square today in Samara was not for TV but for himself and the crowd.

H. Makashov: I said then that all these reformers and perestroika types will be tried. We'll take them out on Red Square to the execution place and we'll flog them . . . right? I said that today there are no Russians in the government, although the country is 85% Russian—native (Russians). When, all week on the telephone and from every direction I am threatened, they ask me "are you still alive?" Yes, I am still alive. But if something happens, I will take you Yids—ten of you—at a minimum from a list—to the other world with me. Right?

* Fifth anniversary of Yeltsin's armed suppression of the Russian parliamentary revolt, and the opposition attack on the Ostankino TV station.

** Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917.

**STATEMENT BY DAVID SATTER BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, JANUARY 15, 1999**

Mr. Chairman:

The end of the Soviet Union did not bring an end to human rights abuses in Russia. If, under the Soviet regime, individuals suffered at the hands of the repressive machinery of the state, the threat to human rights today stems from Russia's pervasive lawlessness and the individual's total physical and moral vulnerability.

As a direct result of the attempt to introduce capitalism quickly and without a moral or legal framework, a criminal business oligarchy arose in Russia. This oligarchy does not persecute people for their beliefs. It is interested solely in money. But no individual is safe from it if he interferes with the process by which it is stealing the Nation's wealth.

The result is that human rights in Russia are violated by the wielders of criminal oligarchical power on a massive scale.

In the first place, in the event of a business or political conflict, ordinary Russians cannot protect themselves against violence or intimidation. In most localities, part if not most of the police force has been appropriated by the local criminal business oligarchy and the police will offer no protection to a citizen who, intentionally or inadvertently, interferes with them even when it is obvious that the complainant is in danger of being killed.

The subordination of the police and, to a great extent, the courts to business criminal mafias has instilled a total lack of faith in law enforcement. Russians are afraid to respond to a knock at the door, to testify as witnesses in trials involving gangsters or to intervene on behalf of the victim of a crime.

Russian citizens are also deprived of the right to private property. It is nearly impossible in Russia to operate a business without paying protection money either to criminal gangs or to the police. At the level of small and medium sized businesses, the grip of organized crime is almost universal and businessmen make regular extortion payments to avoid being killed by their "protectors."

It may therefore be more accurate to say that the businesses actually belong to the gangs although even the gang's control of the business is based on its relative strength and not on any legal right to it.

Finally, in a state in which criminals, businessmen and government officials are constituent parts of rival and competing criminal syndicates who do not accept any overriding, universal rules, the individual cannot hope for any redress of his grievances under the law.

Millions of workers go for months without pay although the failure to pay salaries is illegal in Russia. Millions more were cheated of their life savings in fraudulent investment and pyramid schemes but, despite court decisions in their favor, were unable to recover their money.

If an individual loses his life or health as a result of government or organizational negligence, he has little hope of seeing either compensation or action taken against the guilty parties. A horrifying example of the negligence that total legal impunity helps to inspire was the case of 10-year-old Artyem Mkrtumyan, who was boiled alive, February 22, 1998, when he fell into a pit of boiling water that had been created by a leaking hot water pipe in the center of Moscow. His father, Vladimir, who jumped into the pit in an attempt to save him, was also killed. But

the last time I spoke to Galina Mkrtumyan, his wife and Artyem's mother, she had received no compensation and no one had been punished for the crime.

[It is worth noting that the organization responsible for Moscow's hot water pipes is part of the city administration headed by Yuri Luzhkov, a leading candidate to become the next Russian president.]

The new face of human rights abuses in Russia, in which the individual is deprived utterly of the protection of the law in the face of criminal business mafias, should be of deep concern to the United States. Fear for one's physical security and the conviction that one is helpless to assure the safety of one's family can only have a corrosive effect both morally and spiritually. When this condition is generalized to an entire population, it instills a distaste for democracy and a desire for authoritarian solutions which, in Russia, could have extremely violent consequences.

Insofar as the world has a vested interest in preserving stability in Russia, it is important that the abuse of the Russian population made possible by the current state of lawlessness in Russia be recognized as the Russia's most important and overriding human rights issue.

WRITTEN SUBMISSION OF MARK B. LEVIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY

Mr. Chairman, I commend you and the Helsinki Commission for holding this important and timely hearing on human rights in Russia today. The testimony of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) will focus on the recent anti-Semitic statements espoused by Communist Party officials in Russia. This sustained rhetoric has created a harrowing fear of anti-Semitism in an already precarious environment. The situation requires a sustained response: a strong voice in support of democracy and civil freedoms, and staunch opposition to those opposed to minority rights and freedoms. This is a large task that requires the collective efforts of the U.S. government and human rights organizations. Additionally, the Russian Jewish Congress has asked to associate itself with my testimony.

The NCSJ has served as the voice of the organized American Jewish community on issues of Soviet Jewry for the past 27 years. Comprised of nearly 50 national organizations and over 300 local federations, community councils and committees nationwide, the NCSJ mobilizes the resources and energies of millions of U.S. citizens on behalf of the Jews of the former Soviet Union. The NCSJ welcomes the opportunity to join other human rights organizations that will testify to the deteriorating societal conditions and mounting fears of minorities in Russia today.

The NCSJ works actively with the National Security Council, Department of State and the Helsinki Commission in fulfilling its mandate to secure the rights of Jews living in the former Soviet Union. We continue to support U.S. efforts to aid this region and believe that an active foreign policy is one of the best antidotes to anti-Semitic rhetoric. The NCSJ supports the U.S. Administration and Congressional actions of the last two months in condemning the Communist Party's attempt to rekindle anti-Semitism. In particular, NCSJ is grateful for the strong message sent by Vice President Al Gore and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in their recent meetings with Prime Minister Primakov and Foreign Minister Ivanov. It is imperative that U.S. policy continues its engagement in working with and supporting pro-democracy forces in Russia and elsewhere, and to counter negative messages of ethnic hatred, such as those adopted by the Communist Party of Russia. The NCSJ also looks forward to working with newly created under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

Anti-Semitism has a deep-seated history in Russia. In Tsarist times, a "Pale of Settlement" created a boundary, restricting where Jews could live, while pogroms—mass riots that killed thousands of Jews—prevailed throughout the Russian empire. In the Soviet era, anti-Semitism was state policy, and its firmly-planted roots have allowed post-Soviet anti-Semitism to reappear, as the restraints on the Communist system were lifted. In the last few years, individual acts from synagogue bombings, cemetery desecration and attacks on individuals have occurred. And it is commonly known that in times of economic and political turmoil in Russia, Jews have traditionally become scapegoats.

In recent months, anti-Semitism has become a political tool for numerous members of the Communist leadership. Essentially, the legislative branch of the Russian government has become a vehicle to espouse anti-Semitism. Should the tensions their rhetoric is creating erupt into mass outright violence, Jews might be the first victims, but they would

not be the last. We must defend the rights of all minorities in Russia, and make these views clearly known during this time of economic chaos and political uncertainty.

An independent poll taken in October in Moscow by the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion revealed that many Russians continue to stereotype Jews. Of 1,509 respondents, 52 percent responded negatively to Jewish social-political organizations and parties operating in Russia, and 64% responded negatively to a Jew becoming president of Russia. Asked whether a record should be kept of Jews holding leading positions in Russia and whether there should be a quota, 34 percent responded yes to both. When asked whether many Jews hold posts in the leadership's and government's inner circles, 41 percent agreed, 23 percent of whom were not pleased about it. And 29 percent of respondents did not believe General Makashov should be indicted for his "remarks about Jews." In addition, when asked whether nationality should be a factor when appointing someone to a key government post, 53 percent responded yes. The results of this survey indicate that during troubled economic and political times Russians return to negative stereotypes about Jews and power. It also sends a signal that public messages of anti-Semitism—such as those espoused by elected officials—have the potential to penetrate deeply into the psyche of the Russian population.

BACKGROUND

Political anti-Semitism is a growing problem in the former Soviet Union, particularly in Russia. Today, in Russia, neo-Nazis, skinheads, and fascist ideologues are increasingly committing violence against Jews and other ethnic minorities, while spreading anti-Semitic propaganda. In 1998, anti-Semitic incidents included the beating of two rabbis, the bombing of the Marina Roscha Synagogue for the second time in 2 years, neo-Nazi marches in central Moscow and in front of the Choral Synagogue, and the desecration of two Jewish cemeteries.

The recent political assassination of Duma member Galina Staravoitova, an ardent advocate of human rights, underscores the political chaos and rampant, unchecked corruption raging through Russia today. Equally shocking are the continuing anti-Semitic outbursts of Communist Duma Members Albert Makashov, Victor Ilyukhin and most recently, Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov. In November 1998, the Duma voted down a censure vote on Albert Makashov, demonstrating its failure to prosecute officials who incite ethnic hatred. Shortly before her death, Staravoitova had spoken out against Makashov and his anti-Semitic rhetoric. During Staravoitova's funeral in St. Petersburg, the nationalist, anti-Semitic group The Black Hundreds, marched in front of the Parliament in Moscow in support of Makashov.

In December 1998, President Yeltsin requested a statement from Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov regarding his party's position on anti-Semitism. Zyuganov subsequently sent a letter to the Justice Ministry and the national security chief, containing harsh anti-Semitic references reminiscent of anti-Semitic views in the Soviet era. In fact, his statement in the letter that Jews should either emigrate, assimilate or live as Jews pledging sole allegiance to Russia echoes a statement made by Tsar Nicholas II 100 years ago that one-third of Jews should be killed, one-third should emigrate, and the last third convert to Orthodoxy. The letter also states, "Zionism has actually shown

itself to be one of the strains of theory and practice of the most aggressive imperialist circles striving for world domination. In this respect it is related to fascism." Not only has Zyuganov failed to condemn the anti-Semitic rhetoric of his colleagues in the Duma, but also he has made his own hateful views clear, speaking on behalf of the entire Communist Party.

Duma Member General Albert Makashov has become infamous in recent months for his anti-Semitic outbursts. Makashov publicly blames Jews for the country's economic problems, and advocates a reinstatement of the Pale of Settlement. The newspaper "Zavtra" printed an editorial by Makashov in which he said that a Yid is "a bloodsucker feeding on the misfortunes of other people. They drink the blood of the indigenous peoples of the state; they are destroying industry and agriculture." He recently led a chant at a mass rally, "Death to the Yids!" as demonstrators cheered. At another rally and repeatedly shown on Russian television, Makashov angrily shouted "I will round up all the Yids and send them to the next world!" But Communists in the Duma refuse to officially censure him nor isolate him from the Party, and Makashov has found supporters among Russia's nationalists.

Another Communist Duma Member using anti-Semitism as a political strategy is the head of the Duma's security committee, Victor Ilyukhin. He asserted at a parliamentary session in December that Jews were committing genocide against the Russian people. Ilyukhin complained that there are too many Jews in President Yeltsin's inner circle and called for ethnic quotas in government posts.

In the southern city of Krasnodar, the anti-Semitic rhetoric of Governor Nikolai Kondratenko has reverberated for years. On television, at youth forums, and at mass rallies, Kondratenko charges that Zionists brutally oppress ethnic Russians, and blames Jews for the political and economic problems that plague Russia. "Today we warn that dirty cosmopolitan brotherhood: You belong in Israel or America," Kondratenko said at a rally. He has turned the patriotism on which he campaigned into ultranationalism, declaring that ethnic Russians are the only ethnic group who belongs in the region. Kondratenko has just won reelection, and the anti-Semitic rhetoric has reached a new level. In December, residents of the Kuban region of Krasnodar found leaflets in their mailboxes with the message, "Help save your dear, flourishing Kuban from the damned Jews-Yids! Smash their apartments, set their houses on fire! They have no place on Kuban territory . . . Anyone hiding the damned Yids will be marked for destruction the same way. The Yids will be destroyed. Victory will be ours!"

Economic conditions in Russia have deteriorated drastically in the past year. A fluctuating ruble, inflated consumer prices, and rampant unpaid wages and pensions plague Russian citizens. The chaotic economic conditions, coupled with an unstable political situation, make the future vastly uncertain and have prompted the Russians to look for someone to blame—a traditional choice in Russia has been the Jews.

CONCLUSION

Anti-Semitism remains a serious threat in Russia today. Totalitarian philosophies, such as those cited above, are not concerned with human rights, and have negative views toward minority groups. Meanwhile, weak democratic structures exist in the former Soviet Union, allowing the unchecked freedom to propagate ethnic hatred and vio-

lence. The Soviet Jewry movement has made great achievements over the past three decades. Now is not the time to let a reactionary voice override these accomplishments. Now IS the time for Russia's leadership to exhibit a greater resolve in addressing this issue.

It is critical that the Russian government understand the importance of their commitment to human rights and the rule of law, and that they adhere to that commitment. It is critical that Russia develop the necessary infrastructure to support economic development, and guarantees law enforcement and the protection of civil rights of all its citizens. It is critical to advocate the prosecution of anyone, from common citizen to government official, who propagates ethnic hatred. This is the time to send a strong message to Russia, denouncing the growing anti-Semitism and urge these officials to take concrete action to eradicate anti-Semitism.

The situation also requires continued U.S. government leadership. U.S. leaders must emphasize to Russia's leadership the continued transition toward a democratic and pluralistic society in Russia and the development of an appropriate infrastructure to support economic development, law enforcement and minority rights. Crucial to protecting the development toward democracy is a strong effort to address the economic difficulties in Russia and remain actively engaged in foreign policy efforts so that democracy and a market-oriented economy can flourish. The U.S. must signal to Russia that we stand by a strong commitment to human rights and we are ready to assist them in every way possible in building the foundations of democracy.

It is also imperative that human rights organizations develop educational initiatives that foster pluralism and tolerance and support for human rights and democracy. Some Western models for combating racism and ethnic hatred may be adapted to Russian communities as well. Such programs can encourage multi-cultural understanding and comprise a long-range strategy toward the eradication of anti-Semitism and ethnic hatred in Russia. The NCSJ is prepared to work with other human rights groups to develop appropriate educational programs.

The NCSJ has worked closely with the U.S. Government in this endeavor, and we will continue to do so. We urge the U.S. government to continue its efforts and work with other governments and international organizations to promote the development of democratic and pluralistic institutions and traditions. The protection of minority rights—within the overarching goal of promoting human rights—is at the heart of this effort. Russia's successful development toward democracy depends on it.

**RESPONSE SUPPLIED BY LARRY UZZELL, TO A QUESTION
POSED BY CHAIRMAN SMITH**

[As recorded on page 30 of this hearing.]

Mr. Smith. . . . Which provinces would you say should be prioritized right now?

WRITTEN RESPONSE SUPPLIED BY MR. UZZELL.

Karelia, Khanty-Mansisk Okrug (not the larger Tyumen oblast of which it is part), Irkutsk, Sakha, Krasnoyarsk, Rostov on the Don (city, not oblast), Volgograd, Moscow oblast (not city), Kursk, Oryol, Novosibirsk, Vologda.

WRITTEN SUBMISSION BY MICAH NAFTALIN**“THE RISE IN ANTI-SEMITISM IN RUSSIA”****TESTIMONY OF MICAH NAFTALIN, NATIONAL DIRECTOR,
UNION OF COUNCILS FOR SOVIET JEWS (UCSJ)**

On behalf of Yosef L. Abramowitz, UCSJ president, and our board of directors, I want to Thank you for these important and timely hearings. Human rights and rule of law have recently been among the most tragic casualties during the decline of democratic prospects in Russia and, conversely, we would argue, the economic collapse of the Russian Federation can be attributed in part to a general failure of the Federation, but also its Western supporters, to give the priority to human rights reform comparable to the quest for markets and economic and fiscal stability.

In a few minutes, I will turn to our major premise: that in the fall of 1998 the components of the previous fringe and grass-roots manifestations of anti-Semitism in Russia turned critical like the elements of a nuclear reactor, releasing an explosion of anti-Jewish events sanctioned by Russia's parliament and its chief political party. As the saying goes, “Attention must be paid.”

I am honored to be in the company of a distinguished panel of experts. I am doubly honored to be in the presence of two heroes of the human rights movement. The first is Ludmilla Alexeeva, a founder of the original Helsinki monitoring committee during Soviet times, who paid for her bravery with exile. As current president of the Moscow Helsinki Group, she is my senior partner as we co-direct the USAID- and NED-sponsored Human Rights Monitoring Project for provincial Russia—a remarkable breakthrough, enabled by President Yeltsin's decree creating official provincial human rights commissions, which I have no doubt she will be describing this morning. While sharing many of the responsibilities of that project with MHG, the Union's principal subject-matter emphasis will be the monitoring of anti-Semitism and fascism in the Russian provinces that are the centerpiece of the program.

The second hero, Mr. Chairman, is the Helsinki Commission, its dedicated and expert members, and professional staff. Throughout the decades of U.S.-Soviet and now US-FSU relations, by virtue of the countless CSCE and OSCE meetings on humanitarian affairs, the interventions by the Commission and by individual Members of Congress and Senators, you above all have pressed the moral commitment to human rights which is at the heart of grassroots America's conscience. The victories inside the former Soviet Union by the Soviet Jewry and human rights movements, and the necessary responses to present violations and opportunities, have always and continue to depend vitally on your good offices.

Similarly, without UCSJ's network for monitoring human rights, anti-Semitism and fascism in the FSU, we would lack the knowledge base necessary to mount our advocacy campaigns for human rights generally and for the physical and political safety of Jews. In this connection, permit me to state that the UCSJ is neither a “think tank” nor a report-writing academic institution. Since 1970, we have been the principal Western independent, grass-roots human rights and Soviet Jewry monitoring and advocacy organization operating on the ground

and in direct partnership with activists in the former Soviet Union. At the core of our organization is the work of countless volunteers across the U.S. who have specialized in this work, full- or part-time, for nearly 30 years, and our eight monitoring Bureaus across the former Soviet Union (FSU) including two in Russia. We depend on no government and no other organization to correct, analyze or edit the information we gather.

In the past year and one-half, UCSJ has campaigned most strenuously against two major human rights abuses other than anti-Semitism. First has been our opposition to the Russian religion law, and similar Soviet-style legislation in other republics. I know that Larry Uzzell will be addressing this issue. Second is the case of Alexandr Nikitin in which we have been heavily involved in cooperation primarily with the Nikitin family, the Bellona Foundation, and the Sierra Club.

As you know full well, Mr. Chairman, Nikitin has been charged with espionage and disclosure of so-called state secrets, to wit: publishing from the open literature information about the risk of nuclear contamination of the aging and mothballed Russian nuclear submarine fleet in the North Sea. The risk has been described as a potential Chernoble disaster waiting to happen. No one disputes the information published and the publishing of such information is protected by Russian law. But the embarrassed Russian navy, and the St. Petersburg FSB and prosecutor offices decided to punish the messenger by prosecuting this entirely bogus and political case, and sending a chilling signal to all potential whistle blowers.

He was arrested in February 1996 and held in pre-trial detention for 10 months. Ever since, he has been quarantined to St. Peterburg. Not only does the law protect such whistle blowers as Nikitin, his case has even been rejected by the St. Petersburg City Court for not stating a convincing cause of action since there was found to be no credible evidence of damage to the state, and the criminal charges were based either on secret decrees not available to the defendant or decrees issued after he had been arrested. On October 29, 1998, the lower court made such a finding but, appallingly, did not dismiss the case. Rather, it sent it back to the same old FSB and prosecutors for further investigation. Both sides appealed, and they will be heard by the Russian Supreme Court on February 4.

As we have said many times, we have been witnessing a continuing shift in Moscow from the pro-democracy forces to the old-style security and criminal justice forces. So far, this case has been a victory for Soviet-style repression which also calls into question Russia's reliability as a partner and as a signatory to defense and environmental treaties. Problems involving the "red-brown" Duma aside, the Nikitin case is the responsibility of the Russian Government itself. UCSJ continues to call on the Russian Government to drop this shameful case,

Mr. Chairman, my main testimony today focuses on the alarming rise in official anti-Semitism in Russia, and is based on our monitoring network in Russia, including our Moscow Bureau and the St. Petersburg Harold Light Center, supervised by our affiliated Bay Area Council for Jewish Rescue and Renewal in San Francisco. While too often overlooked or down-played by academics and policy makers alike, UCSJ is convinced that the tracking of anti-Semitism provides a valid barom-

eter and predictor of the viability of a civil society and its reliability as an international partner and signer of defense, trade and environment treaties.

The UCSJ has been tracking anti-Semitism and the so-called “red-brown” in Russia and axis elsewhere in the FSU for many years. As a preamble, let me begin by citing the following two paragraphs which represented UCSJ’s assessment of the situation as recently as August 1998—even before the calamitous escalation of official and grassroots threats to Jews that were triggered in November.

Today, democratic reform in Russia is in retreat. Political power is increasingly shifting toward the communist and fascist dominated parliament as the government comes under the leadership of their candidate, Prime Minister Yevgeny Maximovich Primakov. Yeltsin’s former Foreign Minister is also a former deputy director of the KGB, head of the successor Foreign Intelligence Service, a career Arabist and ally of Saddam Hussein, and a dedicated Russian nationalist. The economy is in free fall and the public faces food shortages and a harsh winter. Millions of workers and soldiers have not received salaries in many months. Political power is also shifting from the capital cities to the provinces. Comparable threats exist throughout the FSU. The historic fear of being scapegoated stalks every Jew.

Although the details are not widely perceived and appreciated by the general public, and despite some improvements related to emigration and worship, there exists today a dangerously rising tide of extremist nationalism neo-fascism and anti-Semitism across the increasingly unstable former Soviet Union (FSU). In virtually every town and city where Jews reside, they are attacked or intimidated by physical assaults, job and school discrimination, demands by local officials for bribes (the Jewish surtax) to perform the most routine services such as issuing birth certificates, arson bombings and desecration of synagogues and cemeteries, anti-Jewish graffiti and written threats in their mailboxes to “go away to your Israel.” There exists a widespread failure of officials to protect them, to investigate complaints or crimes against them, and to let it be known that perpetrators of anti-Jewish hate crimes will face consequences. The political climate, especially outside capital cities, is xenophobic; and the distribution of hate literature by nationalists, Nazi youth, and many elements of the Russian Orthodox Church is rampant and almost never prosecuted. The danger to Jews in Russia and the entire FSU region, long reported by UCSJ, is now graver than ever.

So what is so new and different today? Throughout Czarist Soviet and now post-Soviet times there has always been anti-Semitism, although it is just now that we are hearing again the predictions of pogroms in certain regions. In the past two years, we have heard and made the comparison of Russia to pre-Nazi Weimar Germany that, similarly, was awash in depression, hyperinflation, and political instability. What was lacking prior to November 1998 was the spark needed to incite the violent scapegoating of anti-Semitic fascism.

Recently, as in the late Soviet period antisemitic attitudes have been broadly held, but direct action and incitement to violence against Jews has been largely minimized to the extremist fringes. No “spark” gave the purveyors of “privatized” anti-Semitism permission—a license—to act. We perceive a dramatic increase in the level and threat of violence and political intimidation aimed at Jews that has now been made Pe

ignited—by the action of the Duma to endorse the anti-Semitic threats of General Makashov, followed by the assassination of one of his strongest opponents, Galina Stamrovoitova; and concluded by the December manifesto that establishes anti-Semitism as a policy of the Communist Party of Russia. In other words, the acts of November have offered to formerly passive anti-Semites the permission they previously lacked to openly act out their Jew-hatred. If the rallying cry, “never again,” which animated the early Soviet Jewry movement by referring to the inadequate protective response during the Holocaust, has any meaning or lesson to be learnt, now is the moment to increase our vigilance and response.

Given these conclusions, Mr. Chairman, I would like now to highlight the recent events that support them. Permit me to begin by quoting two phrases:

“To the grave with all Yids.”

“I will round up all the Jews and send them to the next world.”

These chilling words were not the rants of street corner rabble-rousers—they came from General Albert Makashov, a high-ranking communist party deputy and member of the Russian parliament. Even more frightening—perhaps devastating—these words triggered a cascade of anti-Semitic and fascistic events in Russia from which Jews may not soon recover.

I was in Moscow for 10 days in November—one of numerous working trips I’ve made to the former Soviet Union since early 1987—and I must report to you that the consequent level of direct physical and political threat to Jews has grown in the past three months to a level not seen by UCSJ’s activists and monitors there since the collapse of the USSR.

For the past several months, culminating in October 1998, General Makashov has waged a highly publicized hate campaign against Jews—culminating in death threats and calls for quotas on the number of Jews in Russian media, industry and government. In the aftermath of the devaluation of the Russian ruble, the General laid full blame at the feet of the Jews—again using our small, frightened community as a scapegoat for widespread economic chaos. His words, of course, are not unprecedented.

But this time, there is a terrifying difference: On November 4th, the Russian parliament officially endorsed Makashov and his hate-filled rhetoric by voting to defeat a resolution of censure—a signal to all Jew-haters that the genie of state-sanctioned anti-Semitism and fascism is out of the bottle.

Communist party officials not only refused to condemn General Makashov—party chief and former presidential candidate Gennady Zyuganov immediately attacked his critics, claiming the media is controlled by “numerous ethnic Jews who turn the nation into dopes day and night.”

In early December, another Communist party leader of the Duma weighed in. Victor Ilyukhkin, chairman of the parliament’s security and defense committee, accused President Yeltsin and the Jews who he claimed are “exclusively” members of his “inner circle” of committing “genocide” against the Russian people.

Then, in late December, and harking back to the Soviet-era canard that he is not anti-Semitic but merely anti-Zionist, Zyuganov published an “open letter” manifesto that documents beyond question that anti-Semitism is an official policy of the Russian Communist Party. His manifesto declares:

- The “spread of Zionism” is “one of the reasons for the current catastrophic condition of the country,”
- Zionism is “a blood relative of Naziism.” As reported by Moscow reporter Lev Krichevsky in his December 24 Jewish Telegraphic Agency report, “Zyuganov said the only difference between Nazism and Zionism is that Hitler attempted to subjugate the whole world openly, while Zionists, ‘appearing under the mask of Jewish nationalism, act secretly,’” and
- Jews in Russia are entitled only to three options—leave, live as Jews by recognizing Russia as their “only Motherland,” or assimilate.

In light of this new Communist Party manifesto, the CP cannot be seen as merely an opposition party.

At the provincial and grassroots level, perhaps the most powerful neo-Nazi organization is Russian National Unity (RNE), the Nazi uniformed, swastika bearing troops of Alexandr Barkashov who “keep order” in streets and parks, and infiltrate low governments and the local branches of the military and FSB (formerly KGB).

- In Kstovo (Nizhiny Oblast) on November 22, the local official tv station, which reports to the mayor, favorably described the ties between local law enforcement agencies and the RNE, which they characterized as a “normal public organization” that will form a brigade to help police enforce law and order in the streets. The local FSB head described these fascists as “normal young men who want to see more public order in the city.”
- In October in the northwestern Russian town of Borovichi the town was plastered with stickers proclaiming that “Jews are rubbish” and depicting a hand dropping a Star of David into a trash can. A replica appears on the cover of my testimony today. For many months, Barkashovites from Moscow have been organizing teenagers there, engaging in a campaign of death threats aimed at Jews. A recent TV program showed RNE leaders Meeting with military recruiters, planning collaboration. Local police and FSB have rebuffed the entreaties of Jewish leaders seeking protection. When they wrote a letter to the editor of a local paper, the KGB threatened them to withdraw it and, meanwhile, censored the paper’s version.
- I have appended a December 15 report describing the latest “appeal to kill Jews in Krasnodar, where a regional administrator has funded the publication of a blatantly anti-Semitic book, “The Secret History of the 20th Century” and recommended that the schools include it in their curriculum. Krasnodar province is headed by governor Nilolai Kondratenko who is famous for invoking the names “kike” and “kike-mason” dozens of times in a speech to a convocation of youth leaders.

- One of the RNE's strongholds is in the southern city of Stavropol where its Youth Wing, Russian Knights, organizes drill teams and basic training for teenagers, supervised by off duty soldiers.
- I have also appended one of the last dispatches from Emmanuel Mendelevich, a 45-year old and very brave fighter against anti-Semitism, reporter for Express Chronicle, and UCSJ's monitor from Orel. Sadly, I must report that Emmanuel died this week of a heart attack. No one could be more missed. I dedicate this testimony to his memory while UCSJ ponders a more lasting tribute to his memory.

In most of these cases, each a violation of Russian law, appeals to the Procurator General in Moscow go unheeded. Nor has Prime Minister Primakov, unlike President Yeltsin, been known to condemn the rising tide of official and grassroots anti-Semitism. Estimates of Barkashov's numbers range to upwards of 100,000— possibly a high number—but, as Yevgeny Proshechkin, head of the Moscow Anti-Fascist Center notes, "it's not the numbers that are so dangerous; it's the ideology." Noting the comparison to the Weimar Republic, he claims, "a few thousand armed and ideologically prepared people always manage to beat a multimillion-people majority!"

My purpose for visiting Moscow between November 15 and 24 was two-fold. to launch UCSJ's project in partnership with the prestigious Moscow Helsinki Group, for "Human Rights Monitoring in Provincial Russia," and to confer with human rights leaders and UCSJ's network of anti-Semitism and fascism monitors. Here are the key elements of those fateful days:

Tuesday, November 17. Moscow TV broadcast a press conference featuring five KGB officers who testified that in February 1998 they had been ordered to assassinate Boris Berczovsky, one of the principal oligarchs of Russia, a born Jew who has risen to immense financial, industrial and governmental power. Arguably, although a convert to Russian Orthodoxy, he is seen as the proto-typical leader of what the demented Jew-haters see as the "Jewish conspiracy to rule or destroy Russia."

Thursday night, November 19. News flashed across Russia, and the world, of the assassination of our friend and colleague, Galina Starovoitova, a member of the State Duma, a grandmother, and the leading Russian democratic voice opposing anti-Semitism and human rights violations. There have been many assassinations of rich politicians and business magnates in Russia—none leading to arrests—but the murder of Galina is seen as a strictly political statement tied to her democratic record, her pledge to clean up the corruption in St Petersburg, and her attack on Makashov and the Duma's anti-Semitic response.

A few days later a long-time Jewish political colleague of Galina's, now the co-chair of UCSJ's Moscow Bureau gave a TV interview about the assassination. Two days later thugs broke into his Moscow flat in his absence looking for him, beating up his elderly mother-in-law in a vain attempt to find him, and sending her to the hospital.

- During this period, we also learned the following: At least two blatantly anti-Semitic incidents surfaced without subsequent arrests in Nizhny Novgorod, a city only recently seen as a stronghold of liberal government Chief Rabbi Zalman Yoffe was severely beaten by unknown assailants on October 15, and a Russian man was thrown off a bridge to his death because he was mistaken for a Jew. Two Jewish brothers were murdered in Nalchik, and we are investigating the circumstances. Alexander Lokshiri, a 35-year old Jewish engineer was murdered in Moscow on November 20. Jewish leaders in Borovichi have been the target of mail and telephone death threats from fascist youth groups—“Stinking kikes, get away to your Israel or you will be put in the Inquisition fire,” is the hate rhetoric found on a typical flyer. As is true everywhere, city authorities refuse to protect or investigate.
- Over the years our program for Jewish renewal and humanitarian aid, Yad L'Yad, involving 80 partnerships, has seldom yielded unsolicited reports of anti-Semitism, since this is not their primary mission. In recent weeks, this has changed dramatically as we have received fearful alarms from such towns as Penza, Kazan, Barnaul, Yekaterinburg, and Pskov. Thus provincial Jewish leaders who were optimistic for their future as recently as last August began, in November, to express hopelessness and a fear of pogroms. I have not heard such talk in many years.

Because of the recent dramatic increase in anti-Semitism and fascism, I have emphasized an alarming situation in Russia, where UCSJ operates two monitoring Bureaus—in Moscow and, under the auspices of our affiliated Bay Area (California) council, St Petersburg. But UCSJ maintains six other bureaus across the FSU in the Central Asian capitals of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and in Almaty, Kazakhstan where, last year, the Kazakh KGB launched an anti-Semitic campaign of vilification to intimidate and undermine that country's independent labor leader, Leonid Solomin: in Tbilisi, Georgia, headed by chief rabbi Ariel Levine, who continues to seek the return of an historic synagogue from a city administration that refuses to honor a court order; in Riga, Latvia, that monitors anti-Semitism and fascism in the Baltics, an example where anti-Semitism exists in countries whose economies are not foundering; in Minsk, Belarus, a totalitarian and nationalistic dictatorship headed by a president who has praised Hitler in public. There, the government-controlled radio station has aired a reading of the centuries-old anti-Semitic forgery, “Protocols of the Elders of Zion”; and in Lviv, a city in western Ukraine that is a hotbed of anti-Semitic fervor.

Across the former Soviet Union, our Bureaus monitor anti-Semitism and fascism—sometimes Islam fundamentalism as well—including the accelerating atmosphere of minority religious persecution that so far is primarily targeted on fundamentalist Christians, fostered by recent Soviet-style laws that regulate and discriminate against religions seen as competitive with the doctrine or authority of the Russian Orthodox Church. Most well known of these is the law enacted by the Russian Duma in September 1997. But a similar law in Uzbekistan, for instance, has recently led to the attempt to deport the Lubavitch rabbi in Tashkent, while in Lithuania a similar law has delegitimized the

Lubavitch-Chasidic community, denying its legal status as a “traditional religion” and thus disqualifying it from holding property that belonged to its congregation before the Holocaust.

As we gather here in this hearing room of the U.S. House of Representatives, I cannot resist adding a few observations. After all, the monitoring and reporting and combating of anti-Semitism has importance far beyond the need to protect Jews.

First, the existence of anti-Semitism, and the failure of authorities to speak out, to investigate, to prosecute, is a valid barometer of the ill health of the society. It speaks to the moral and legal rot that cannot support a civil society. It speaks to the extent of fear and envy and distrust of the population, and measures the potential for civil disobedience and political upheaval. It measures the dangers such a society posts to its citizens, its neighbors and its international partners. It is at least as important— a measure of democratic viability and reliability as data used to track crime, or missiles, or environmental contamination or trade or other economic and financial indicators. And the failure of governmental leaders—national and local—to take responsibility for ending it is a measure of the true, anti-democratic inclinations of those leaders, whether they be friend or foe.

Second, the presence of anti-Semitism is a measure of a weak human rights environment, of the lack of an infrastructure for religious tolerance, for the rule of law and a civil society—indeed, for the preconditions for a market democracy at all. The leaders of the former Soviet republics, and their academic, political and financed supporters in the West, have all been complicit in the failure of democracy and the economic crisis caused by the ponzi schemes and massive theft by governments, oligarches and Mafia alike. Governments, academics, industrialists and media are now expressing surprise and alarm. No human rights activist waiting in the FSU is even slightly surprised.

Third, perhaps most fearful the West in a massive denial that the Emperor wears no clothes, has been issuing propaganda for many years that Russia is truly an emerging democracy. If so, say the communist and fascist leaders, who already control the parliament and many provinces, the cold, starving, and unemployed workers have had enough of democracy. Unfortunately, democracy as we know it has become, together with the Jews, a compelling scapegoat.

Human rights and diplomacy have never been easy bedfellows. The governments of the FSU and the West must do better. They should take the wisdom of the human rights forces as seriously as that of the economists, the deal makers, the disarmament inspectors, the diplomatic negotiators. They should learn to tell the difference between the trappings of democracy and actual human rights when they design foreign assistance programs. They must learn that human rights principles, not continued access to flawed leaders, is the more valuable coin of international relations.

Meanwhile, those few of us in the grassroots human rights movement must find the support we need to strengthen our capability to monitor and provide defensive advocacy. It's among the only hopes the people of the FSU have for a civil society. UCSJ is a human rights organization; but our special barometer is the tracking of anti-Semitism and fascism. As successful as we have been, our resources are woefully inadequate. We are committed to do better.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, may I return to my introductory commendation of the Helsinki Commission? While it is obvious to you and, I daresay, to the Congress at large, that the combating of anti-Semitism is an import concern for Jews, for Russian society, and for the prospects for democracy in the Russian Federation, it is hugely off the radar screen of serious public concern elsewhere. I regret to say that it has hardly been found on the agendas of the major Jewish organizations' annual conferences during the past two years. Prior to last November, it has had but the most sporadic sightings in the Anglo/Jewish press, and even less attention in the general media. This week, it was largely absent in an otherwise thoughtful and expert two-day seminar conducted by a prestigious Institute held at the Woodrow Wilson Center here in Washington, even during the session on nationalities issues. It was missing from the planning of an Ivy League conference focusing on the present cultural life of Russian Jews, Scheduled for February. It has not seized the priority concerns of the Department of State's advisory committee on religious persecution.

Indeed, with the sole exception of a recent seminar conducted by Paul Goble of Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty, the Helsinki Commission is the only important venue I know of that takes seriously the direct and indirect implications of anti-Semitism and fascism in Russia. As we have done so many times over the years, the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews commends you and your colleagues.

Thank you.

RUSSIA TODAY, 15 JANUARY 1999

TRADING COMMUNISM FOR ANTI-SEMITISM

BY YEVGENII PROSHECHKIN

The Communist faction in the Duma has categorically refused to officially condemn the anti-Semitic statements its member Gen. Albert Makashov made in November. For many observers in Russia and especially in the West, that came as an unpleasant surprise.

Over the past few years, a lot of effort has been put into creating a myth about the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF); its leader, Gennady Zyuganov; and its place in the political system of present-day Russia. The myth went something like this: there is a big, bad Yeltsin regime in Russia. It is confronted by the opposition led by Zyuganov and his Communists.

The fact that the party is called “communist” is most likely a tribute to tradition. Since Zyuganov has repeatedly assured his audiences in the West that all forms of ownership would be maintained if he came to power, he is not a communist but more of a social democrat. He plays according to the rules of a civilized society, and one could make deals with him.

Some have even argued that one could presumably cooperate with Zyuganov in combating xenophobia and racism and in halting the proliferation of fascist organizations and ethnic conflicts. After all, the argument went, communists and social democrats were not so long ago enemies of Nazism, so KPRF, now evolving toward social democracy, could well become a bulwark against the danger of fascism.

That myth, however, has been fully exposed, precisely over such sensitive issues as fascism, Nazism, and anti-Semitism. There is only one thing in that line of reasoning one could have agreed with: Zyuganov is no communist. Just look at what he has written in his *Derzhava* (State Power) and *Za gorizontom* (Beyond the Horizon). According to Zyuganov the writer, there was no Stalin terror, there was no repression, there were no innocent victims. Nikita Khrushchev’s report at the 20th Communist Party Congress “On Stalin’s Personality Cult” was inspired by the CIA. The world view, the culture, and the ideology of the West are increasingly influenced by the Jewish community. The latter is becoming the major shareholder of the entire economic system of Western civilization. Under these circumstances, Russia will be the only barrier against Western hegemony.

The Communists, along with the Duma faction of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, have been blocking, year after year, legislation against Nazism, fascism, and extremism. I myself submitted a draft on responsibility for publicly expressed justification of the crimes of Nazism (similar to the existing German law on the issue) a year ago. But the Communists unanimously let that bill die.

So why is Zyuganov not condemning General Makashov? The reason is simple: if he did, Communist voters, shaped by party-fanned xenophobia and anti-Semitism over recent years, would abandon their allegedly moderate leader and turn to extremists such as neo-Bolshevik Viktor Anpilov.

The truth is that the KPRF has not been preaching communism or socialism; it has been advancing the ideas of national socialism. The Makashov case illustrates yet again that the red-brown symbiosis—

about which many had been warning for years—has become a dire reality. If a party advancing such an ideology came to power, it would bring about chaos, a chain of ethnic conflicts resembling those in former Yugoslavia (only, understandably, on a much larger scale), installation of dictatorial regimes throughout the former Soviet Union, and ultimately streams of refugees.

Translated by Victor Kalashnikov. Yevgeny Proshechkin is the chairman of the Moscow-based Anti-Fascist Center and member of the presidential commission for countering political extremism.

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**RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EXPLOSION EXPRESS-
KHRONIKA DECEMBER 14, 1998**

A previously unknown organization, the Revolutionary Partisan Group (RPG), took responsibility for the explosion this autumn at the Nicholas II memorial in Podol'sk.

A letter from Nizhny Novgorod was sent to the editor of "Express-Khronika" with a "Declaration Number 1" which said, in part: "With the explosion at the memorial of the bloody hangman of workers and peasants Nicholas II in the city of Podol'sk, the Revolutionary Partisan Group continues the campaign to destroy the symbols of tsarism which was started by the RVS RSFSR and the RKKA." The authors of the declaration stated that the act was committed as a sign of protest against "repressions of revolutionaries who have spent more than a year in Lefortovo prison" (the FSB's investigative holding facility- Editor). In connection with this declaration, the press service of the Moscow and Moscow Oblast FSB stated that at this time two members of the RVS ("Revolutionary Military Soviet") Igor Gubin and Andrei Sokolov are being held on charges of terrorism. Both of them are in the FSB's investigative holding facility at Lefortovo in Moscow. The charge, based on Article 205 of the Criminal Code ("Terrorism"), is connected with attempts to blow up the Peter I memorial in Moscow and with the explosion at the Nicholas II memorial in the Moscow Oblast town of Tainskoe. If Gubin and Sokolov are found guilty, they would face up to 20 years in prison. The FSB up to this point had not heard anything about the "Revolutionary Partisan Group". The Podol'sk prosecutor is now investigating the explosion at the memorial in Podol'sk.

Translated by: Nikolai Butkevich
January 2, 1999

**"RED BRIGADES DON'T EXIST"
BY MARGARITA SOVA**

DECEMBER 14, 1998

At his press conference on December 8th, the leader of the Movement in Support of the Army (DPA), chairman of the State Duma Security Committee and member of the KPRF fraction Viktor Ilyukhin called the publication of the discovery in a Moscow Oblast village of "red brigade bases" a "political provocation." According to several media outlets, a large quantity of weapons was allegedly stored at these bases and leftists like Albert Makashov, Vladislav Achalov and the leader of the Union of Officers, Stanislav Terekhov, held secret meetings there. Ilyukhin stated that he sees a direct connection between the published accounts of the "red brigades" and an incident that took place on December 6th. On that day, the OMON detained on the Moscow-Novgorod line a Cossack ataman, one of the leaders of the DPA, Mikhail Filin. Filin recently attracted attention to himself through his extremist pronouncements at a meeting of Communists and national-patriots on October 3rd. He is accused of illegal possession of a firearm.

Translated by: Nickolai Butkevich
January 2, 1999

**NEO-NAZIS DECIDE TO CAUSE A SCANDAL
BY EMMANUEL MENDELEVICH,
REPORTING FROM OREL**

DECEMBER 14, 1998

On December 3rd, during a meeting with the TV journalist Vladimir Pozner that was taking place in the Theater of Young Viewers building, Orel neo-Nazis tried to create a scandal. Members of the "Russian Party" (which local members of the RNE recently joined) distributed leaflets at the theater entrance that called Pozner, "a famous TV windbag, one of the agitators for American values, democracy and other gibberish directed at destroying Russia."

Speaking about unsolved assassinations, Pozner mentioned the murders of John F. Kennedy, Ulof Palme [Translator's note: Name as transliterated], and Martin Luther King. In response, one of the neo-Nazis said: "Are you putting the death of a white person on the same level as the death of a black person? Think about it, they killed a Negro." In a note that the TV journalist received from the audience, nationalists asked him to "say hello to the skinhead Kiril" who appeared on one of Pozner's programs and spread his extreme racist views. The leader of the local neo-Nazis Igor Semenov let loose some antisemitic remarks and in the end was taken out of the hall by police.

Translated by: Nickolai Butkevich
January 2, 1999

THE RNE IN BALAKOVO: "YOUTH EDUCATION"
BY GALINA RADAeva

DECEMBER 14, 1998

The RNE under present circumstances opposes this (young people's lack of spirituality, and aspiring to easy money—Editor) with the military-patriotic education of youth. Many of the kids who have completed pre-conscription training can stand up for themselves in any of life's situations and complete their military service with dignity in all the 'hot spots.'

Every day, "Russian National Unity" increases the scope of its activities by opening new branches and affiliates. The large flow of youth joining the RNE bears witness to the fact that they have gotten sick of hanging out on the streets, individualism, and infantile existence and also shows their desire for order, discipline, and a normal, human collective. The influence of the "Ratibor" (the city's RNE military-patriotic center—Editor) in our city is supported by the city's Military Committee, the Union of Reserve Officers, the Veterans of Afghanistan Fund, and other societal organizations."

This citation comes from a leaflet distributed in the city of Balakovo, Saratov Oblast, where a powerful branch of the RNE is active. The RNE even has its own deputy in the City Soviet: Aleksandr Kraynov. According to the city newspaper, the mayor of Balakovo Aleksei Saulin, "in the context of planned meetings between the head of administration and the leaders of public-political organizations" held discussions with the head of the Balakovo RNE Grigory Trofimchuk during which they spoke about youth education issues, as well as problems of religion and national culture.

The way the RNE sees these issues is clearly expressed in a different leaflet: "Russians! A small number of aliens are behaving in our land like occupiers on conquered territory, not submitting to any laws and taking the tolerance and restraint of the Russian People to be signs of weakness. They are united in their desire to rule over 'Russian slaves.' Russians! If you want to be masters in your own land, join the Russian National Unity movement of A. P. Barkashov (RNE)! Under our rule in Russia: the autonomous formations that have been forced upon Russians, in which Russians everywhere are the majority, will give way to guberniyas; the government will turn its face to honest Russian owners and producers; Russian women will be able to give birth to Russian children; the radio, television and newspapers won't be able to slander Russians."

The city press publishes with pleasure articles that express the viewpoints of the RNE. For example, the big article by a certain K. Chuprin in the August issue of "Balakovo Fire" which justified the barkashovtsy's use of the swastika and reviles the Russian flag and the Star of David and finishes with information about the founding in Samara of the so-called Anti-Fascist Committee. It was headed by the leader of the oblast's RNE Kondrashov and "one of the Committee's tasks is the struggle against those who howl about the 'threat of Russian fascism.'"

Translated by: Nickolai Butkevich
 January 2, 1999

“ALL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT PANDER TO THE NAZIS”

DECEMBER 14, 1998

The authorities' position in the struggle against manifestations of nationalistic extremism was commented on by a member of the Presidential Expert Commission on Opposition to Political Extremism, chairman of the Moscow Antifascist Center, Evgeny Proshechkin.

“I was shocked by the naivete of the Minister of Justice Pavel Krasheninikov who expressed his confidence that the State Duma, as it is currently constituted, could pass a law banning Nazi symbols and literature and a law on the struggle against political extremism. The Duma's rejection of the first of these bills did not surprise me in the least. I myself sent to the State Duma draft versions of similar laws, which met with the same fate. This is the clear line, the hard line position that the majority in the State Duma has taken for many years. Regarding the procession of Nazis through the historic center of the city, that also did not surprise me in the least. Our police only needed a few minutes to disperse the Moscow Antifascist Center's 1995 protest at the Russian National Unity headquarters in Il'inka. But skinhead youths can act with total freedom, yelling out openly racist slogans. In my view, this is yet more proof of the authorities' clear connivance with fascist and extremist organizations. I think it is an extremely dangerous sign that people like the leader of the Congress of Russian Communities Dmitry Rogozin, whose aides are extreme nationalists, are entering into the ruling organs of the “Otechestvo” movement, which is headed by the mayor of Moscow. In general, human rights among us are best defended when the human in question “has Hitler on his head and a swastika on his arm.”

Translated by: Nickolai Butkevich
January 2, 1999

**“ANTISEMITES TAKE ACTION”
BY EMMANUEL MENDELEVICH, REPORTING FROM OREL**

DECEMBER 21, 1998

On Constitution Day, December 12, antisemitic signs appeared on the city's central square. The signs stated that Jews are guilty of causing all of contemporary Russia's problems. They also “exposed the real last names” of well-known politicians. A large number of people gathered around the signs to show support for the antisemites. Police officers who were present did not react in any way, but when the crowd dispersed several hours later, the signs were destroyed.

Translated by: Nickolai Butkevich
January 2, 1999

**“JEWS APPEAL TO SAVE A CEMETERY”
DECEMBER 28, 1998**

BY V. BARANOV

A group of Jews living in Yalta appealed to the government on December 23rd to save a Jewish cemetery in which 4,500 Jews who were shot by the Nazis in December 1941 are buried.

Today the cemetery is being slowly overrun by property belonging to the Port of Yalta. Cottages for rich people are being built next to the cemetery. In addition, some graves have been dug up by people in search of gold or jewels.

Translated by: Nickolai Butkevich
December 31, 1998

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Besieged Jews in Russia get support from Bay Area

Leslie Katz, April 16, 1999 Jewish Bulletin of Northern California
Local efforts to help besieged Jews in an isolated northwestern Russian town have produced dramatic results.

Targeted by the fast-growing ultra-nationalist Russian National Unity Party, the Jews of Borovichi cried out to the Bay Area Council of Jewish Rescue and Renewal for help. Most of the town's Jewish families had received hate mail. Anti-Semitic posters were plastered throughout the city of 80,000, located halfway between Moscow and St. Petersburg.

On learning of those threats, the S.F.-based BACJRR sent an alert to the local Jewish community and leaders in Congress. The word went out in public meetings, by mail and over the Internet. Immediately, hundreds of letters and e-mails of concern poured into Borovichi authorities from the Bay Area and as far away as Spain, Germany and Argentina.

Six months later, the 500-member Borovichi Jewish community was granted a space in the center of town for a Jewish human rights center and synagogue. And the local Duma, or legislature, passed four laws prohibiting the ultra-nationalist RNU from inciteful activities.

"To tell you the truth, even I am amazed at how progressive our mayor and governor have been since receiving sacks and sacks of letters from all over the world in defense of Jews," Edward Alekseev, president of the Borovichi Jewish community, said by e-mail last month.

This week, Alekseev helped lead a two-day seminar on countering extremist messages among youth. Among those slated to attend were human rights workers, the American consul general in Russia and Borovichi's mayor, who helped plan the event.

The mayor's participation marks the first time a city administration has initiated such a program, according to Alekseev.

Pnina Levermore, executive director of the BACJRR, a human rights organization promoting freedom and survival in the former Soviet Union, said she never expected such an overwhelming response to the campaign.

"This is all because of the fact that we wouldn't just leave this alone. We targeted it with a kind of surgical persistence."

The strategy, Levermore said, was to pressure local authorities in the Novgorod region.

"Obviously there is a serious problem on the federal level in Russia," she said. "But beyond that, there are localities where local authorities have total control over what happens in their own region."

What happened in Borovichi was chilling.

Members of the RNU, or so-called Barkashov Party, opened an office, recruiting members at local schools and on local television. They marched through the streets dressed in signature black uniforms and swastikas. Jews received letters at their homes saying they had better leave or the streets would run with Jewish blood. Jewish graves were desecrated.

Among posters appearing on town walls was one showing a stick figure tossing a Jewish star into a garbage can. "Jews—garbage," the caption read.

At Temple Beth Torah in Fremont—Borovichi's partner city—congregants heeded the call, sending letters to the town's mayor and governor. The Reform congregation also sent funds for the High Holy Days and Passover. And members chatted with Alekseev by phone with the help of a bilingual congregant.

Before the international pressure hit, the authorities did little to allay the anxiety of Borovichi's Jews, Alekseev told Levermore during a September meeting in St. Petersburg.

He asked that American Jews send e-mails of support directly to Borovichi's Jewish residents. The BACJRR has maintained almost daily contact with the community leader. The town's Jews "need to feel they're not forgotten, that there is concern about their fate," Levermore said.

Laws passed in recent months ban the RNU from meeting, wearing swastikas and distributing fascist leaflets, books and posters. Shortly after the laws passed, several RNU members were arrested, though they were released pending an investigation.

"Apparently the RNU has gone underground," Levermore said.

Observers call the progress in Borovichi dramatic, though the threat from extremists is far from over. Levermore predicts progress in stemming the RNU in Borovichi may extend to other parts of the Novgorod region but is unlikely to fan out to the entire country.

E-mail messages can be sent to the Borovichi Jewish community at shalom@novgorod.net

