

## Where Freedom Begins

Speaking of exorcism, it's curious how many things are coming together to bedevil the Jews these days.

In one corner of the world, Russian Jews are being savaged in a way that's almost unnoticed, because of other events. The term "Russian" is used advisedly. About eight out of 10 Soviet Jews live in the Russian-Ukrainian area of the Soviet Union. But only about one out of 10 Soviet Jews allowed to emigrate is from that area. It is gratifying that tens of thousands of Soviet Jews are still allowed to emigrate each year. But that sometimes obscures the parallel fact that the heartland of the Soviet Jewish population is, relatively speaking, under lock and key. And in terror.



Raab

**The Kremlin keeps about 600 Jewish families on a harassment list. If one family is taken off, another replaces it. The purpose is to intimidate the total Jewish**

**population.**

Mark Genrikhovich Lutsker applied for emigration and was expelled from the university. Making a further request about his emigration status, he was arrested and sentenced to a two year sentence in a labor camp. Gilel Grigorievich Chaet was tucked away in a "psychiatric hospital." Aleksandr Feldman is serving three and one-half years in a labor camp, charged with "hooliganism." Leonid Zabelishensky has just been given a six-month sentence for "parasitism." Vikto Faiermark, a Ph.D. in chemistry, was told that he would be fired from his job and would then be subject to charges of parasitism. Mikhail Goldblat, a Moscow mathematician was threatened with the same charge.

Goldblat was undoubtedly heartened when he heard (as he surely did) that his American colleagues, while at a Mathematicians Convention in San Francisco last week, went to the local Soviet consulate to complain about the treatment of Soviet Jews. The Bay Area Council on Soviet Jewry suggested that little jaunt, the mathematicians were quick to follow through, and the Soviet government was embarrassed again. As it will be once again in February, when the JCRC, the Bay Area Council and the Soviet Jewry Action Group, jointly bring two recent Soviet emigres to this area, to speak on the Peninsula, in Marin and in San Francisco.

The Soviet government needs America too much, at least at this moment, to like the idea of being exposed in these ways before the American public. Sakharov said recently that freedom in the Soviet Union partly depends on America. So the Soviet Jews have said over and over that their fate may depend on the strength and the democratic impulses of America. And, in another corner of the world, the Israelis openly acknowledge the extent to which *their* fate depends on the strength and the democratic impulses of America.

So, American Jews have reason upon reason for wanting to strengthen the democratic impulses of America. Some are suggesting that our Jewish agencies should begin to concentrate a bit more on certain areas of domestic public affairs. The principle of equal opportunity in employment, in housing, in education need more attention than they have been getting lately.

**At the same time, American Jews should be up front in helping other Americans avoid dangerous and illusory short-cuts through freedom, even when the goals seem to be praiseworthy. Dealing with the local Nazis is a case in point. Supreme Court Justice Brandeis once wrote: "Experience teaches us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purposes are beneficent."**

In sum, like it or not, the world's freedom begins here. And, among other things, the survival of world Jewry depends upon it.