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REMARKS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.
REPUBLICAN LEADER, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AT A RALLY FOR SOVIET JEWRY
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
7:30 P.M. E.S.T., MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1971

FOR RELEASE AT 6:30 P.M., E.S.T.
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I am very proud to be with you tonight. This mass demonstration is in the finest tradition of the United States. I say so because this gathering is positive in its approach rather than negative, constructive rather than destructive, and for a great cause rather than against such a cause. The cause advocated here is human freedom.

It has been brought to my attention that today is the first day of the Hebrew festival of Chanukah. I am told that this is an occasion when one is supposed to light candles to commemorate an ancient struggle for Jewish liberation. As a fellow American who is inspired by the deeds of Israel and the brave struggle by so many Jewish residents of Soviet Russia, and as the person responsible for the leadership of my party, the Republican Party, in the United States House of Representatives, I want to join in lighting some candles of hope. Let there be beacons of light that shine forth from this meeting to let the Jewish people of the Soviet Union know they have not been forgotten.

I see no point in elaborating on or repeating the facts of which you are so painfully aware. You know that there are more than 40 Jews in prison in Russia merely because they sought the right to join co-religionists in Israel. You know that Sylva Zalmonson is dying in captivity. You know about the deprivation of cultural and religious rights, the scapegoating of Jews, the anti-semitic propaganda, the discrimination in education and employment. You know about the cruel obstructions placed in the way of those who seek to emigrate.

The real reason I came here from Washington is to discuss what the United States Government can do to help Soviet Jewry.

Some of our diplomats and experts on the protocol of statesmanship have, in the past, insisted that we have no business as a Government to comment on the internal and domestic affairs of another nation. But that has not stopped the Soviet Union from intervening in the internal and domestic affairs of Czechoslovakia, of Hungary, of Poland, of Romania, of Lithuania, of Latvia, and

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of other nations. They--the Russians--have certainly not hesitated to intervene in the affairs of the peoples of the Middle East. They certainly showed no sense of propriety in intervening in the India -Pakistan dispute when they vetoed the United Nations' efforts to stop the bloodshed!

Since the Soviet Union uses its veto at the United Nations and asserts itself through the U.N. when it suits Russian convenience, I feel that it is now very appropriate for the United States to remind the Russians of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights. And I speak specifically about the right of the Jews of the Soviet Union to live as normal human beings with all the rights and freedoms enjoyed by others--and especially the freedom to leave the U.S.S.R. if they want to.

Earlier this year, President Nixon urged freedom of emigration for Soviet Jews as explicitly provided for by Article 13 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights. He also called for cultural and religious freedom for Soviet Jewry.

It would now appear to me that the President of the United States has an historic opportunity to serve a compelling humanitarian cause on his forthcoming visit to the Soviet Union. The President will be speaking with the prestige of our great nation. The Russians will be seeking various concessions and compromises from the United States. The time would be ripe for President Nixon to very appropriately raise the issue of Soviet Jewry with the Soviet Government.

When Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada visited Moscow he told the Kremlin how Canadians felt about the oppression of the Russian Jews. Leaders of many other nations have similarly expressed themselves. President Nixon can exert the greatest impact on behalf of Soviet Jewry.

Accordingly, I will recommend very strongly to the President that he consider this line of direct action. If the decision is made at top levels now, there will be adequate time for planning and structuring the most effective approach.

The Jewish people of the Soviet Union have been singled out for special restrictions. They are denied the consideration accorded other minorities. The Kremlin is very sensitive to this issue. It has undermined the Communist pretensions of human equality and social justice. Indeed, there are some indications of minor concessions by the Moscow authorities to the rising outcry of world public opinion. This year more than 7,000 Jews were permitted to emigrate to Israel in response to the pressures exerted by men of good will. 1971 has been a record year.

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But this is not the moment to relax our efforts. Too many lives are at stake. Too many men, women, and children are waiting. Too many people are in jeopardy.

The President has a very clear mandate from the Congress. Our Congress has adopted many resolutions and other expressions requesting and authorizing the President to act on behalf of those subjected to religious discrimination by the Soviet Union. During the Eisenhower Administration, as far back as 1953, the Congress condemned the persecution by the U.S.S.R. of all minorities. In 1954 the Congress asked the churches and synagogues of America to set aside a portion of their services on Easter Sunday and Passover for special prayers for deliverance of all those behind the Iron Curtain who are denied freedom of worship. Perhaps it would be wise to repeat this in 1972.

Even now there is new legislation pending before the Congress. I have offered my support for a House concurrent resolution that calls for the free exercise of religion in the Soviet Union and asks that country to permit its citizens to emigrate to countries of their choice.

The Attorney General, Mr. Mitchell, has already disclosed that Soviet Jewish refugees could be admitted to the United States under the parole authority provided by our immigration laws. I congratulate the Attorney General on this initiative. This makes it unnecessary for Congress to pass additional legislation covering non-quota visas for Soviet Jews. This action by our Administration imposes no limitation on the number of Jewish refugees who could be admitted to the United States. I refer, of course, to persons who may not elect to settle in the State of Israel because they have relatives here or for some other reasons.

I might mention at this point the fact that the Voice of America has increased the amount of its broadcasts in Russian, on Jewish subjects, beamed at the Soviet Union. This is significant but I personally believe there should be Voice of America broadcasts in Yiddish. Not only would this tend to enhance the Jewish cultural heritage among Soviet Jews, but it also would be a symbol of U.S. support for Jews in the Soviet Union.

I would like to reassure you that President Nixon has been carefully following the cause for which you have assembled. As far back as 1959, when he served as Vice-President, Mr. Nixon inaugurated a practice of presenting to Soviet leaders lists of names of Soviet residents, including many Jews, who were denied

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exit permits to join relatives in the United States. In fact, Mr. Nixon innovated this approach on a visit to Moscow in that year, 1959.

I would make a particular point with the President that he place high on his agenda the liberation from Siberian labor camps of all persons jailed for Jewish activities. Also, there is no reason that a government which pretends to be civilized cannot for humanitarian considerations notify Israel, whether or not Israel is diplomatically recognized at this time by that government, of numbers and dates of departure of Jews to be released from Russia. Then the Jewish Agency and the Israeli Government Ministry of Absorption would be in a better position to make adequate preparations for housing, feeding, jobs, education, health and so forth. Now there is no notice whatever until the trains arrive in Vienna from Russia.

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In this country we have an American Psychiatric Association. I would recommend to the A.P.A. that it adopt a suitable resolution condemning the Russian psychiatrists when the association meets at its coming convention.

Perhaps educators, clergymen, scientists and people of various other professions in the public sector of American life could do likewise when Soviet policies involve a particular profession. This struggle must be waged on a people-to-people basis as well as a government-to-government basis.

I will return to Washington better equipped to see the President of the United States on the basis of the strong dedication to human liberty demonstrated by you here in this great meeting in the city of New York. I can bear witness that America cares. Over the harbor of this city stands the Statue of Liberty. It symbolizes the role of our nation as a champion of the oppressed and as a haven for those who seek to worship God in their own way. It is a light to the world.

Let our American values again demonstrate to the peoples of the world that we Americans have not changed in our devotion to the freedom and brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God. I thank you.

*6 Dec
Jew*
~~Dear~~ — (Not given)

We are gathered here tonight because the [redacted] voices of [redacted] oppressed and persecuted [redacted] cry out to us from the Soviet Union.

It is appropriate that we meet at this time, the first day of Chanukah (hahn-ewe-cah). Again we mark the historic festival of liberation. We commemorate the time when small but dedicated bands of Jewish freedom-fighters battled to prevent religious and cultural genocide.

You are like those early freedom-fighters. They fought to perpetuate the Jewish people and the Jewish nation, and tonight you are gathered to help perpetuate the Jews in the Soviet Union.

Wednesday will be the third day of Chanukah and the anniversary of the [redacted] first Leningrad Trial. Tonight and every night from now on should be a tremendous [redacted] more than [redacted] of support for the [redacted] Jewish Prisoners of Conscience now being held in Soviet jails. And [redacted] tonight and every night should be marked by a Herculean effort to free those prisoners and especially Sylva Zalmonson, who as you know is dying while being held captive—dying for the so-called crime of wanting to go to Israel.

*You are painfully aware
of details*

For the more than 40 Jewish [redacted] Prisoners of Conscience being held behind prison walls by [redacted] Soviet [redacted] oppressors the [redacted] fight could be for mere physical survival.

But there is more than [redacted] physical survival involved when we consider the plight of all Soviet Jews. The [redacted] basic issue is the survival of Jewish identity, the right of the individual to decide how he worships his God, the right of freedom of choice.

It is fitting that the United States Government and citizens of all faiths identify with the Jewish observance of Chanukah (hahn-ewe-cah). There is deep



next May, and I will urge him to do [redacted] so. I personally attach great importance to this matter.

concern in this country about [REDACTED] the religious and cultural genocide being practiced on Jewish citizens of the Soviet Union by their [REDACTED] Communist masters.

The plight of Soviet Jews has not been--cannot be--exaggerated, not while there [REDACTED] is even one Jewish Prisoner of Conscience [REDACTED] locked up behind cold prison walls in the Soviet Union.

As for cultural [REDACTED] and religious genocide, it has been documented that Soviet Jews suffer because of grossly inadequate religious facilities, pressures against synagogue attendance, lack of Yiddish or Hebrew teaching, tokenism in the publishing and staging of Yiddish works, quota restrictions on university entrance, and exclusion from careers considered sensitive and from important political jobs.

The charge of cultural genocide is fully justified. We all know that Soviet Jews are deprived of the ingredients needed to preserve their [REDACTED] cultural [REDACTED] and religious identity. And we have seen outbreaks of anti-Semitism from time to time in the Soviet Union, tied in with developments in the Middle East.

(MORE)



If Soviet Jews were not being discriminated against and oppressed, why would they wish so desperately to leave the Soviet Union?

The mere fact that nearly all Soviet Jews, like other Soviet citizens, are held prisoner in their native land is proof enough of oppression.

Individual [redacted] applicants for emigration have been harassed. Jewish activists

[redacted] have been sentenced to terms in forced-labor camps.

It is no comfort that other [redacted] Soviet civil-rights activists and minority-group militants have been subjected to similar reprisals. The fact remains that Soviet [redacted] Jews suffer recurrent repressions simply because they are Jews. And this is unconscionable.

pride of Jews?

Are we to excuse Soviet pressures for assimilation? Cultural genocide is a crime.

"Man doth not live by bread [redacted] only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live."

Nobody who values freedom of the spirit can make light of the arrests, trials and convictions of Jews in Leningrad, Riga and Kishinev this year merely for possessing Hebrew [redacted] dictionaries and prayer books.

How can anyone say that Soviet [redacted] Jews are not living in a state of fear?

It was just last December that the Soviet Union imposed [redacted] death sentences [redacted] on two Jews and commuted those sentences to [redacted] lengthy prison terms only because [redacted] of the pressure of world opinion.

Leningrad pair

They now are serving out those harsh prison terms, together with other Jewish

Prisoners of Conscience [redacted] in earlier trials.

In my view, Jews in the Soviet Union are [redacted] being terrorized. And

it is the obligation of every member of Congress to [redacted] protest the fact that the Soviets will not let them live as Jews or let them leave the Soviet Union.

So the Soviet [redacted] Union's Supreme Court commuted the sentences of the two Jews who had been condemned to death. The world breathed [redacted] a sigh of relief. But do we

[redacted] congratulate someone who stops murdering people and simply maims them?

If conditions for [redacted] Soviet Jews do not deteriorate, should we say, "wonderful, things could be much worse?"

I join with you in [redacted] saying the Soviet Union is guilty of cultural [redacted] genocide and should halt immediately all repressive practices aimed at [redacted] assimilating Jews into the life of the Soviet state.

I join with you in demanding that the Soviet Union let all Jews who wish to leave Russia depart for other lands freely and without harassment.

There are no words more meaningful than that brief utterance in Exodus, "Let my people go."

It is the finger of God which writes of the preciousness of freedom and the sacred right of religious liberty.

Let me tell you right now that I strongly support the [redacted] Anderson-O'Neill bill, House Concurrent Resolution 471, which calls for the free exercise of religion in the Soviet Union and demands of the Soviet Union that it permit its citizens to emigrate to the countries of their choice.

There is hope, I feel, in the fact that the Soviet Union yielded to the weight of world opinion in commuting the death sentences after the Leningrad trials.

There is hope in the [redacted] reports that the Soviet Union has allowed more than 7,000 Jews [redacted] to emigrate to Israel this year under pressure from sit-ins, petitions and [redacted] hunger strikes at home and public opinion abroad. This is admittedly a small number but [redacted] large in comparison with the allowed emigration of any other Soviet group. And it [redacted] is the largest total for any one year to date.

The Nixon Administration stands solidly behind Soviet Jewry on the issue of emigration.

Last January 11 President Nixon urged "freedom of emigration as explicitly provided in Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" as well as "cultural and religious freedom at [redacted] home and abroad."

Recently our Government [redacted] told a Youth Mobilization for Soviet Jewry: We

believe that free movement is one of the basic human rights of all persons. We have

expressed sympathy and support on many occasions for persons in the Soviet Union who wish to emigrate, often to rejoin their [redacted] families elsewhere, but who are denied permission to do so. We [redacted] shall continue to... take every practical measure which could help to overcome the [redacted] hardships suffered by such persons."

Our Government

The State Department regularly presents to Soviet officials at a high level the names of Soviet [redacted] residents, including many Jews, who have been denied permission to join close relatives in the United States. Richard Nixon, when he was vice-president, inaugurated that practice [redacted] visit [redacted] the Soviet Union in 1959.

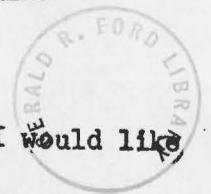
This year's list included the [redacted] names of some 150 Soviet [redacted] Jews.

The Soviet Union has permitted a small amount of emigration to the United States-- about 250 persons a year. This year, through Oct. 31, our embassy in Moscow had issued 251 emigrant [redacted] visas. [redacted] Of these, 134 were issued to Jews. This compares with 1970, when [redacted] the Soviet Union allowed [redacted] only 78 Soviet Jews to emigrate to the United States.

It is [redacted] just possible that [redacted] the Soviet Union might suddenly alter its present policy and allow a [redacted] much larger number of Soviet Jews to leave for the United States.

Because of that possibility, Attorney General John Mitchell has announced that under such circumstances he would exercise his discretion and would parole Soviet Jews who are able to leave the Soviet Union. This makes [redacted] it [redacted] unnecessary for Congress to [redacted] consider legislation providing for non-quota visas for Soviet Jews. I applaud this initiative on the part [redacted] of the Nixon Administration. Use of the Attorney [redacted] General's parole [redacted] power places no limitation on the number of Soviet Jewish refugees who can be admitted to this country.

There is another initiative I would like to see President Nixon take. I would like him to include the plight of Soviet Jewry on the agenda for his summit meeting at Moscow next May, and I will urge him to do [redacted] so. I personally attach great importance to this matter.



I might mention at this point the fact [redacted] that the Voice of America ^{has} [redacted]
[redacted] increased the amount of its broadcasts in Russian on Jewish subjects [redacted] [redacted]
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Yiddish. Not only would this tend to enhance the Jewish [redacted] cultural heritage [redacted]
among Soviet Jews, but it also would be a symbol of U.S. support for Jews in the Soviet
Union.

The task that [redacted] remains before us is to keep up an unrelenting campaign aimed
at bringing the continuing [redacted] pressure of world opinion on the Soviet
Union. Pour it on! Only through such a campaign can we get the Soviet Union to lift
[redacted] its restrictions on [redacted] emigration of Soviet Jews and to abandon the terroristic
practices of firings and even arrest and imprisonment for those [redacted] Jews who defy the
authorities in order to live as Jews.

We must press for an end to officially-sponsored and officially-condoned
anti-Semitism in Russia. We must seek full rights of religious liberty for Soviet
Jews. Our battle cry must be...liberation!

We have a great cause. Our cause is just, and I feel [redacted] sure we will be
triumphant.

Our cause will prevail because "truth...is mighty above all things."
Let every man and woman here be [redacted] strong and of good courage. Let us move
forward in unity.

Let us live anew the message of Chaunukah (hahn-eve-cah)--that no power on earth
can crush the faith of man. As the prophet Zachariah said, "Not by might nor by
power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

It is that [redacted] spirit which guides us tonight, as we look forward to the day
hand of the [redacted] lifted [redacted] and the Prisoners of [redacted] Conscience
when the oppressor shall be [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
in [redacted] shall be free both [redacted] body and [redacted] soul. #####

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