

# The New Russian Revolution: Rush To Freedom

## Are the Russians still coming?

By JOEL ROTEMAN, Executive Editor

Concern over the relatively small flow of Soviet refugees in recent weeks centers on whether the limit of 40,000 Soviet refugees for fiscal 1991 will be reached. This prompted a Chronicle phone call to the State Department's Bureau of Refugees.

From October through January 31, 10,046 Soviets have arrived in the US, the Bureau spokesman said. That would project out to a little over 30,000 cases instead of the anticipated 40,000.

The Pittsburgh community is expecting 200 Soviets for '91, but to date, only 50 have arrived through the first six months.

The January-February drop-off isn't on the American end, the Bureau spokesman told The Chronicle.

"We are processing the applications quickly," but there are some problems on the Soviet side, she conceded. Getting exit documents in the USSR and processing by the Soviet OVIR offices are at the root of the problem.

Despite the current difficulties, the State Department expects that by year's end (October, '91), "we will be close to the 40,000 number."

Two "cracies" -- bureau-

cracy and democracy -- are part of the Soviet hold-up, not a change in the political wind in the Soviet Union. "Some Soviet officials are exercising their democratic rights as never before, but we are discussing the issue at the highest levels."

On the American side, "we have improved our Washington Processing Center," the system of case investigation. "Even if the Soviet system was not bogged down in bureaucracy, the start-up of the joint US-Soviet transportation system for refugees created some backlog."

SPATE, the Soviet Pan American Travel Effort,

which unites Aeroflot, Pan Am and the two governments in providing transportation, operates three ways to provide the refugees with transportation:

1. Obtaining a transportation loan from the US;
2. buying a reduced fare ticket from SPATE; or,
3. buying a ticket on their own.

Even making such a choice sometimes is a problem that takes time for the Soviet refugee.

The State Department expert cautioned that even "if they make all arrangements, there is no guarantee that they actually get aboard a plane."

Meanwhile, here in Pittsburgh, over 300 new volunteers -- mentor families, tutors, drivers, translators, deliverers of Judaica baskets and those who help by locating apartments and helping with the set-up, are awaiting Soviet settlers.

According to HIAS, the agency involved in the arrival of Soviet refugees here, the Immigration and Naturalization Service doubled its interview schedule begin-

ning in the past month of March. This should bring in the bulk of the refugee load in the final six months of the fiscal year, April to October.

There is a possibility of a "bulge" in the final three months of the year, if the OVIR exit problems are cleared up.

All told, it is probably a little too early to panic over the reduced pace of Soviets exiting for the US.

## Salute to resettlement volunteers

The more than 500 Pittsburgh volunteers who participated in the local effort to resettle Soviet Jews will be honored at a special program Monday, April 22, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Shalom Congregation, Squirrel Hill.

"We are presenting this program to honor all those volunteers who have come forward from the community to help the New Americans become part of the Jewish community," said Arlene Weisman, president of the United Jewish Federation's Women's Division, which coordinates resettlement volunteer services.

Special guest speaker for the evening will be Dr. Misha Galperin, special consultant on immigration affairs and professional services to the Federation Employment and Guidance Service and the New York Association for New Americans.

"We are pleased to have Dr. Galperin as our guest speaker," said Harriet Kruman, chairwoman for the event. "Dr. Galperin, himself a Soviet immigrant, is responsible for program development in all areas of Soviet immigration."

"Our volunteer effort



**VOLUNTEER Recognition Committee members include, standing from left: Arlene Weisman, president, Women's Division; Carolyn Lebowitz, co-chairwoman, Volunteer Services Committee; and Linda Silverman, co-chairwoman, Volunteer Services Committee. Seated, from left: Liza Tuchinskaya, member, Volunteer Recognition Committee; Louise Silk, chairwoman, Volunteer Services Committee; Harriet Kruman, chairwoman, Volunteer Recognition Committee; Merrille Weissman, chairwoman, UJF New American Resettlement Committee; Rose Berman, co-chairwoman, Auxiliary Services. Not shown: Naomi Caplan, Barbara Rosenstein, Karen Shapira, Linda Tashbook.**

starts the moment a New American family arrives at Greater Pittsburgh Airport where they are welcomed by volunteers," said Louise Silk, chairwoman of resettlement volunteer services.

There are many areas where volunteers have helped in the resettlement

process. They include:

Finding and furnishing apartments, serving as mentor families, assisting in career development, welcoming incoming families with Judaica baskets, inviting New Americans for hol-

iday celebrations, providing legal assistance, offering specialized medical and dental care, driving New Americans to doctor, dental and job interview appointments, acting as English tutors and staffing the Resettlement Referral Line (521-INFO).

"The volunteers play a vital role in the overall resettlement effort," said Merrille Weissman, chairperson of the UJF New American Resettlement Committee. "They work as partners in conjunction with professionals, providing person to person help as our New American brothers and sisters begin new lives."

Volunteers offer help as concerned individuals and as members of groups such as the National Council of Jewish Women, Pittsburgh Section, which coordinates the mentor family project and English as a Second Language tutoring program.

The entire community is invited to attend. Dessert will be served and there is a \$5 charge. Dietary laws will be observed. For information and reservations, call 681-8000, ext. 217.

## BB publishes manual on outreach to Soviets

WASHINGTON D.C. - The B'nai B'rith Commission on Community Volunteer Services (CVS) has published a manual on "Project Outreach," outlining activities and projects designed to help integrate recently arrived Soviet Jewish immigrants into their new

communities.

Single copies of the booklet are free. Additional copies are available for \$1 each. Call or write the B'nai B'rith CVS Commission, 1640 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036; (202) 857-6582.

**THE FINGER NAIL PARLOUR** FORMERLY OF STATION SQUARE

**NEW SET OF NAILS \$25.00**

**Ask for Kathy**

ONE PARKWAY CENTER, SUITE 225  
PARKWAY WEST, GREENTREE  
937-9890

MINUTES FROM DOWNTOWN. PLENTY OF FREE PARKING

## MEET THE NEWEST AMERICANS

Though they arrived in Pittsburgh less than one year ago, the Proekt family's careers in the United States are well underway, thanks in part to the Career Development Center.

Veronica and Mark Proekt were both professionals in Leningrad, she a medical doctor and he a mechanical engineer. Upon their arrival, they began English classes at Anathan House with their two children, Alex, 14 and Semyon, 7.

After two months of English lessons and meetings with the Career Development Center, Veronica found work as an LPN at Mercy Hospital. Mark found a job "by himself" at an electronics company.

Son Alex, a student at Hillel Academy, studied at a special school in Leningrad where he specialized in English as a second language classwork and was able to understand and speak English completely upon his arrival. Semyon is a student at CDS.

They both like school -- Semyon had to learn English but it was not really hard for him," Veronica relates.

The Proekts chose to come to Pittsburgh because cousins, the Zakhareviches, lived here.

The Zakhareviches "were like our guardians when we got here -- it helped us a lot," Veronica recalls.

Veronica likes Pittsburgh and says, "It's a nice city and I have many new friends," but she misses her hometown and her brother who now lives in Moscow. Her mother, Betti Karolina, lives with the family in their Squirrel Hill apartment.

**Hey, Kids!**

Bring in this card on your birthday and you get a "kids dinner" compliments of Abate.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
My Birthday is on \_\_\_\_\_  
When I will be \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

**ABATE**  
Waterworks Mall

**Italian & Seafood Restaurant / 781-9550**

**P.S.** Dessert is always complimentary on your birthday, even for Moms and Dads.