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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SEMINAR ON RELIGIOUS RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION May 3, 1988 East Room

1:25 pm	Welcome	Hon. Thomas Griscom, Assistant to the President for Communications and Planning
	Panel:	 Hon. Thomas Griscom Amb. Richard Schifter, Assistant Secretary for Human Rights Amb. Rozanne Ridgway, Assistant Secretary for European and Canadian Affairs
		Lisa Jameson, Director for European and Soviet Affairs, NSC
1:30 pm	Ukrainian Myro Lithuania Bish Russian O Pota Ukrainian Esto Evangelic Hill Soviet Je	Orthodox Church - Pastor Frank ocin al Protestant Denominations - Kent
2:00 pm	Testimonies of Witnesses Father Vladimir Shibayev Pastor Stefan Matveyuk Iosif Begun Mykola Rudenko	
2:25 pm	Break for pres	s set-up.
2:30 pm	President Rona	ld Reagan.
2:40 pm	Break for pres	ss departure.
2:45 pm	Discussion.	
3:00 pm	End of program	ι

May 9, 1988

NR

John W. Whitehead IV President new

Michael Patrick

David A. French f General Counsel

F. Tayton Bencer b Special Counsel

Larry L. Crain (Staff Counsel

Deborah A. Ausburn a **James Braden** b Associate Counsel

Rebecca M. Beane Project Coordinator

tu Admitted in Arkansas; Virginia † Admitted in Michigan, Virginia b Admitted in Esiftomia c Admitted in Tennessee, Virginia 6 Admitted in Géorge, Virginia 6 Admitted in California President Ronald Reagan The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of The Rutherford Institute I wish to express my appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the recent seminar on Religious Liberties in the Soviet Union at the White House. Your remarks indicated your sensitivity to these issues.

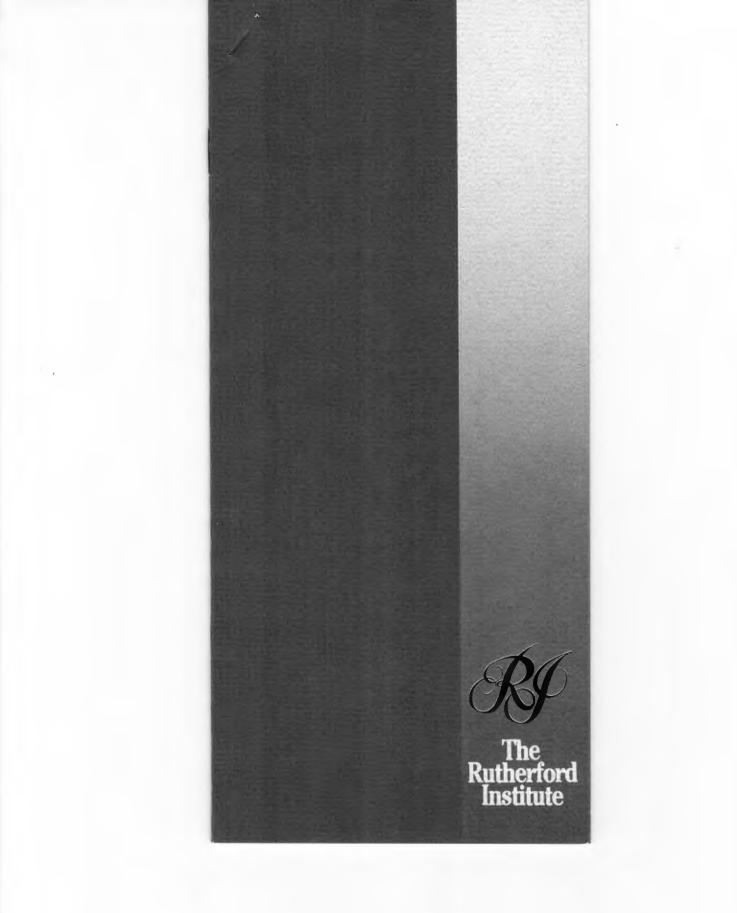
The state of religious liberty in a nation is not a side issue, such as cultural or educational exchanges. Our own national founding testifies that religious liberty remains the driving force which fuels a nation's understanding of those inalienable, God-given rights which cannot be infringed by government.

We support your efforts to arrive at real peace in the upcoming negotiations with General Secretary Gorbachev. As you well know, an arms treaty which might equate a relaxation of tensions with true peace would be a delusion. As Jean-Francois Revel argues, "We can always relax tensions just by yielding to force." True peace is achieved only through the active recognition of certain absolute values. That is why religious liberties are the litmus test by which real, lasting progress can and should be measured.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to participate in these discussions. We look forward to your leadership in these negotiations and pray for your continued success.

Sincerely Michael Pathick

MP/1b



A Fundamental Freedom

Like the men who established our government, most of us abhor the prospect of state censorship — using the law to silence particular ideas. In a resounding defense of the value of free speech, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes stated:

"When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market...."

Nevertheless, one particular form of speech has been increasingly denied entrance into the "free trade in ideas." Through misinformation and misinterpretation, state officials, in many instances, have tried to push religious expression *outside* its First Amendment protections.

Providing Legal Relief

The Rutherford Institute is a nonprofit legal defense organization that protects the freedom of religious expression.

The Institute is a legal organization, not a religious one. We don't adhere to a specific creed. We don't expect everyone to follow the same religious doctrine. Nor do we expect the right to impose particular religious beliefs on those who don't voluntarily accept them. But what we do expect is that religious people will have the same right to publicly express their beliefs that all other Americans exercise. We expect that right because the First Amendment guarantees it. Freedom of speech. Freedom of the press. Freedom of religious exercise. Without discrimination. Yet discrimination exists — as evidenced by the following cases handled by the Rutherford Institute:

■ In a Pennsylvania junior high school, three students were suspended because they passed out copies of a newspaper with religious content. They gave these out to fellow students in the hallways between classes, and forced the papers on no one. But while students could freely exchange such magazines as *MAD*, *The Rolling Stone* and *Sports Illustrated*, this particular newspaper was censored solely because of its religious content.

A federal district court ruled that the ban violated the students' free speech rights, and ordered school officials to permit the newspaper's distribution. Students do not "shed their constitutional rights... at the schoolhouse gate," the court stated.

■ In Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, two men were arrested for giving brief sermons near the public town square. The charge was disorderly conduct, although the arresting officer admitted that the preaching did not disrupt traffic flow or commercial operations. The sole grounds for the arrest, as came out at trial, were complaints from some people who found the message annoying.

The judge correctly dismissed the charges. "The constitutional right of free expression is a powerful medicine in a society as diverse and populous as ours," he stated. "That the air may at times seemed filled with verbal cacophony is... not a sign of weakness but of strength."

Rutherford

Institute

Funding

The Rutherford Institute is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization in accordance with 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It charges no fees for its legal services, which are funded solely through grants and individual donations. The Institute is audited annually by an independent Certified Public Accountant, and its Financial Statements are available upon request.



The Rutherford Institute P.O. Box 510 Manassas, VA 22110

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THE JEWISH EDUCATION PROGRAM (JEP)

Rabbi Shlomo N. Mandel Executive Director

May 18, 1988

Mr. Max Green Office of Public Affairs The White House Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Green:

I would like to formally thank you for your assistance in enabling our delegation attend the President's remarks on religion in the U.S.S.R. Your personal intensive efforts in ensuring that we be present was truly touching and very much appreciated. May the Almighty give you the opportunity to do much good for many years to come.

Yours truly,

Rabbi Shlomo Noach Mandel

RSNM/sl

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