

June 7, 1971

Dr. Isaac Toubin
American Association for Jewish Education
101 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10003

Dear Isaac:

Thanks for the copy of your letter to
Harold Saperstein.

The idea sounds like a good one but I
would want to think about it and discuss
it with my colleagues. Let me know first
what reactions you have received.

My congratulations on creative and imaginative
thinking.

Cordially,

NL/hh

RABBI NORMAN LAMM

101 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10003
(212) 675-5656

התאחדות חסידי חב"ד בארצות הברית

American Association for Jewish Education

ISAAC TOUBIN
Executive Vice-President

June 3, 1971

Norman -

Best wishes for a pleasant summer

Rabbi Harold Saperstein, President
New York Board of Rabbis
10 East 73rd Street
New York, N.Y.

Dear Harold:

I should like to place before you a proposal for an appropriate and dramatic way in which the synagogal community can commonly express its concern for the welfare of Soviet Jewry. This suggestion arises not only from my own observation that the synagogues have not been exploited as a means of Jewish political demonstration, but also because I note that, even in the midst of the trials in Russia, there has been no Jewish manifestation other than concealed political intervention.

My suggestion is that on Yom Kippur, immediately following the Musaf Services, and at a commonly agreed upon hour, all Jewish congregations be dismissed from services to congregate in the streets outside the synagogue for the purpose of a solemn demonstration of solidarity with Soviet Jewry. Wherever necessary, the morning service should be accelerated. Wherever possible, neighboring congregations should join forces in such a public manifestation. Banners should be erected in advance and nothing should be done to violate the religious sanctity of the day. A special talk should be delivered and prayers appropriate for the occasion should be selected or composed.

In the middle of Manhattan the demonstration should take on a much more dramatic form. There are some twenty congregations within walking distance of the Soviet Mission or the U.N. Each of these congregations should join in a common demonstration either outside the synagogue opposite the Soviet Mission, or in front of the U.N. Members of

all congregations should march quietly and on the sidewalks from the synagogue service to the street service, and then return to their own congregations. I believe tens of thousands of people can be rallied in this fashion and that the Yom Kippur service itself can be contemporized in a way that is fitting to the significance of this day in the Jewish calendar.

While my proposal is addressed to New York City and its huge concentration of congregations, it might be of comparable merit in other communities of the country who would wish to participate in such a national religious demonstration.

I do not suggest Rosh Hashana, because I feel that once people leave a synagogue not to return, there will be no assurance that they will assemble in a common place. And, I do not suggest Sukkot, because a very small percentage of the community attends synagogue on Sukkot. I recognize the complications that such a plan involves and it may very well be that this proposal is utterly impractical. Nevertheless, I submit it to you for your consideration. I am thinking not only of the participation of young school children and youth, but also of those adults of the community who generally are not seen in the field of social action.

Sincerely,



Isaac Toubin

IT/cw

cc: Abe Bayer
Harold Gordon
Norman Lamm ✓
Irving Lehrman
Steven Ryskind
Solomon Sharfman
Henry Siegman