

THE JACKSON AMENDMENT

On East-West Trade & Freedom of Emigration

The Jackson Amendment to the Trade Reform Act of 1973 was introduced on April 10, 1972 in the form printed below. It was sponsored by 76 Senators and the corresponding legislation introduced by Congressman Charles Vanik had 289 House cosponsors. The amendment in its final form, approved by the Congress on December 20, 1974, was signed into law by President Ford on January 4, 1975. (Trade Reform Act of 1974, Public Law 93-618).

AMENDMENT No.-79

At the end of title V of the act, add the following new section:

EAST-WEST TRADE AND FREEDOM OF EMIGRATION

SEC. 507. (a) To assure the continued dedication of the United States to fundamental human rights, and notwithstanding any other provision of this Act or any other law, after October 25, 1972, no nonmarket economy country shall be eligible to receive most-favored-nation treatment or to participate in any program of the Government of the United States which extends credits or credit guarantees or investment guarantees, directly or indirectly, during the period beginning with the date on which the President of the United States determines that such country—

(1) denies its citizens the right or opportunity to emigrate; or
(2) imposes more than a nominal tax on emigration or on the visas or other documents required for emigration, for any purpose or cause whatsoever; or
(3) imposes more than a nominal tax, levy, fine, or other charge on any citizen as a consequence of the desire of such citizen to emigrate to the country of his choice and ending on the date on which the President determines that such country is no longer in violation of paragraph (1), (2), or (3).

(b) After October 15, 1972, a nonmarket economy country may participate in a program of the Government of the United States which extends credits or credit guarantees or investment guarantees, and shall be eligible to receive most-favored-nation treatment, only after the President of the United States has submitted to the Congress a report indicating that such country is not in violation of paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection (a). Such report with respect to such country, shall include information as to the nature and implementation of emigration laws and policies and restrictions or discrimination applied to or against persons wishing to emigrate. The report required by this subsection shall be submitted initially as provided herein and semi-annually thereafter so long as any agreement entered into pursuant to the exercise of such authority is in effect.

[From *The Congressional Record*, December 13, 1974]

OPEN LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

From Andrei Sakharov

Moscow. At a time when the Congress is debating fundamental issues of foreign policy, I consider it my duty to express my view on one such issue—protection of the right to freedom of residence within the country of one's choice. That right was proclaimed by the United Nations in 1948 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

If every nation is entitled to choose the political system under which it wishes to live, this is true all the more of every individual person. A country whose citizens are deprived of this minimal right is not free even if there were not a single citizen who would want to exercise that right.

But, as you know, there are tens of thousands of citizens in the Soviet Union—Jews, Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Armenians, Estonians, Latvians, Turks and members of other ethnic groups—who want to leave the country and who have been seeking to exercise that right for years and for decades at the cost of endless difficulty and humiliation.

You know that prisons, labor camps and mental hospitals are full of people who have sought to exercise this legitimate right.

You surely know the name of the Lithuanian, Simas A. Kudirka, who was handed over to the Soviet authorities by an American vessel, as well as the names of the defendants in the tragic 1970 hijacking trial in Leningrad. You know about the victims of the Berlin Wall.

There are many more lesser known victims. Remember them, too! For decades the Soviet Union has been developing under conditions of an intolerable isolation, bringing with it the ugliest consequences. Even a partial preservation of those conditions would be highly perilous for all mankind, for international confidence and detente.

In view of the foregoing, I am appealing to the Congress of the United States to give its support to the Jackson Amendment,⁷ which represents in my view and in the view of its sponsors an attempt to protect the right of emigration of citizens in countries that are entering into new and friendlier relations with the United States.

The Jackson Amendment is made even more significant by the fact that the world is only just entering on a new course of detente and it is therefore essential that the proper direction be followed the outset. This is a fundamental issue, extending far beyond the question of emigration.

Those who believe that the Jackson Amendment is likely to undermine anyone's personal or governmental prestige are wrong. Its provisions are minimal and not demeaning.

It should be no surprise that the democratic process can add its corrective to the actions of public figures who negotiate without admitting the possibility of such an amendment. The amendment does not represent interference in the internal affairs of socialist countries, but simply a defense of international law, without which there can be no mutual trust.

Adoption of the amendment therefore cannot be a threat to Soviet-American relations. All the more, it would not imperil international detente.

There is a particular silliness in objections to the amendment that are founded on the alleged fear that its adoption would lead to outbursts of anti-semitism in the U.S.S.R. and hinder the emigration of Jews.

Here you have total confusion, either deliberate or based on ignorance about the U.S.S.R. It is as if the emigration issue affected only Jews. As if the situation of those Jews who have vainly sought to emigrate to Israel was not already tragic enough and would become even more hopeless if it were to depend on the democratic attitudes and on the humanity of OVIR [the Soviet visa agency]. As if the techniques of "quiet diplomacy" could help anyone, beyond a few individuals in Moscow and some other cities.

The abandonment of a policy of principle would be a betrayal of the thousands of Jews and non-Jews who want to emigrate, of the hundreds in camps and mental hospitals, of the victims of the Berlin Wall.

Such a denial would lead to stronger repressions on ideological grounds. It would be tantamount to total capitulation of democratic principles in face of blackmail, deceit and violence. The consequences of such a capitulation for international confidence, detente and the entire future of mankind are difficult to predict.

I express the hope that the Congress of the United States, reflecting the will and the traditional love of freedom of the American people, will realize its historical responsibility before mankind and will find the strength to rise above temporary partisan considerations of commercialism and prestige.

I hope that the Congress will support the Jackson Amendment.

(signed) A. SAKHAROV.

September 14, 1973.