

FROM RUSSIA - TO FINLAND

Conference of leaders of different Holocaust associations in Finland 2010

I felt honored to be invited to join a group of leaders of Holocaust associations, themselves survivors, to travel to Russia and Finland. Their plan was to have a retreat and a conference there. Pavel, the Chairman of the organization in St. Petersburg and a good friend has begged me for years to come and visit him. And Sergei, the only delegate from Israel, who should not travel alone so far after his open-heart surgery last fall, needed some assistance. So, here we went, Sergei and myself, flying to Russia to

Dr. Sergei Sushon from Israel + Inge



friend
Chairman

Our good
Pavel Rubintchik
in St. Petersburg.

visit first Pavel and his wife, who live in a modest home - but one feels like a „queen“ with their gift of hospitality - and then together by train to Finland. Some of the other leaders from Minsk and Kiev joined us on the train; others we met at Helsinki. From there our hosts, who are wonderful Finnish Christians, brought us by bus to our destination, about 5 hours north of Helsinki. These Christians have a real heart for Israel! In many ways it was a wonderful

trip: being called in Yiddish “our beautiful child,” ending up with three of these gentleman in the Russian Ballet! I was spoiled! What a joy to meet survivors again like Mischa from Minsk. I believe you all would be touched by experiencing their strong sense of belonging and their deep respect for one another. Some know each other from the time in the Ghetto, physically some are quite ill, but still they came all this way by train, many hours from Kiev, Moscow and Minsk. They are incredible people! I could share more blessings, but my time in Finland



Kejo with Vasili - giving Thanks

left me somehow also with a very heavy burden. I saw all these leaders -inwardly very strong and clear—however physically fighting many serious illnesses. Never before have I been more aware of the fact, that there is almost no one who can some day take their places. Who will fight for the other survivors like they do? One of the biggest blessings, but also totally heart breaking was for me to meet Alexy from Germany. He is one of the most positive people I have ever met, but had one of the most horrible stories I have ever heard. His story did leave me speechless! After all the atrocities he himself went through—both of his kids were killed, the younger one murdered. How can he make others laugh? What an example he is! Concerning the conference: Boris explained to me, that they discussed at their meetings problems within the organizations, how to help the poor, and how to fight anti-Semitism. I asked about anti-Semitism in Russia: The reply was: “Yes, there is, “but it does not come from the government!” which seems to make them feel relatively safe!

Are we more worried than they are? I have to admit, that this answer concerns me, knowing how much responsibility they as leaders carry. Please pray, that they will discern the “signs of the times rightly!” Ifim, the President asked: “Inge, when will you organize something like this for us in Israel?” Well, I don’t see that now, but I learned one thing: “Never say: Never!”

„I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.“ Isaiah 41:17

1. Prof. Ifim Gologorski , Moscow - President of the organizations together with Inge
2. Moysey Ockerman, delegate from Germany
3. Vasili Michaelovski, delegate from Kiev
4. Dr. Alexy Heistver, President in Germany
5. Michael Treyster, Chairman from Minsk
6. Dr. Boris Zabarko, Chairman from Kiev



