

## HELP THEM SURVIVE!

There was never anything resembling a Nuremberg trial in Russia. The thousands of judges, executioners, concentration camp guards and secret policemen who murdered millions of innocents were never brought to trial.

It is as if the crimes had never existed. Many of these butchers are still alive. They live on a government pension, enjoy the respect of their families and friends and lose no sleep over what they had done.

The fate of the gulag survivors is much sadder. The government never acknowledged its debt to these innocents. All that the government has done was send a piece of paper to the relatives of those who died and to the few survivors who are still alive telling them that they were “rehabilitated”. There is no restitution, not even an apology – just acknowledgment that they are no longer to be considered criminals.

Most of the survivors are sick and there is no reliable medical care for them. Most of the survivors are destitute – they are too old and too feeble to earn a living. Most of the survivors struggle to survive again, this time as free men and women under a government that didn’t and doesn’t care.

There is a man in New York who is helping them. His name is Yuri Fedorov. He was one of the two non—Jews who participated in the attempt to take a passenger plane to Sweden in 1970. This was the Leningrad Trial that made headlines around the world. The plot failed – the group had been infiltrated by the KGB – and the sentences were harsh: death for some and long prison sentences for the rest. After a worldwide uproar, the death sentences were commuted to 25 years in prison and most of the prisoners went to Israel after 5 or 10 years.

Fedorov served his entire term and has been living in New York for over 10 years. He is a busy man. He has created the Gratitude Fund – an organization with just one goal: to help the gulag survivors in the former Soviet Union. He sends in medicines, food, information. It’s a lonely and frustrating task but he will go on doing it for as long as he has the strength.

The Gratitude Fund is a tax-exempt charitable organization. It exists on contributions from those who have not forgotten these few heroic survivors of the struggle against a cruel regime. The Fund has hardly any overhead, no hired staff, no advertising budget.

Here is an excerpt from a letter I received from Fedorov. It's a cry for help:

"This year we weren't able to collect even the minimum that our clients need to survive. All we could send to Moscow this year was less than \$10,000... We ask you to involve just a few of your friends – even the smallest contributions are important... At this time our goal is to help with \$150 monthly. This is not enough to survive in Russia today. If you take into account the cost of medicine and medical care – most of our clients are old and sick – this is tragically inadequate.

"We are doing all we can but the memory of the dissidents and their tragic fate is getting weaker – with some help from the dictatorship of the KGB and its successor, FSB. We are probably the only voice that urges that last century's heroes be remembered.

"Help the Fund like you had helped before and ask friends to join you."

Signed by: Vladimir Bukovsky, Eduard Kuznetsov, Yuri Yarim-Agaev and Yuri Fedorov – names that were well known to those of us who fought for human rights and Jewish emigration in the bad, old days.

I will continue helping, but more importantly, I urge you to join me and spread the word. Send your tax-deductible contribution to **Gratitude Fund, 535 W. 110<sup>th</sup> street, #6-E, New York, NY 10025. You can call Yuri Fedorov at 212-866-5635 or 845-254-6997**, or visit [www.thegratitudefund.org](http://www.thegratitudefund.org)