

To the Editor:

SHIFT IN COURAGE

Solzhenitsyn's "Decline in Courage (in America)" accusatory address at Harvard University on June 8th, finds support in the Rayman-McKay article (Journey to Russia in Quest of Rule of Law-NYLJ June 6th, p.1).

Interestingly, unmentioned by Solzhenitsyn-Rayman-McKay is the shift in courage. Historically, all protests and revolutions in favor of freedom and liberty were led by and included a substantial number of lawyers, who forfeited their status in favor of their idealism. The scientific community, generally unaffected by the form of the secular government, were non-participants.

Now, as acknowledged by the Rayman-McKay report, the Refuseniks and other dissidents are men of science and mathematics, not lawyers, who, transcending the loss of professional security have risked personal safety, in their struggle for freedom and humanity.

If the Solzhenitsyn charge that " a society without any objective legal standard is a terrible one ... a society with no standard but the legal one is not quite worthy of man either " (N.Y. Times, June 9th, p. A8), has any merit, then the conclusion of Rayman-McKay deserves repetition:

" ... our visit, and visits by others
with comparable objectives, advance
... the human rights we espouse.

* * *

Significantly, no one to whom
we spoke thought we should not have
come: the dissidents and Refuseniks

were very clear as to that. They welcome visitors from the West and count on them for sustenance in the often discouraging fight against great odds and unrelenting pressure.

We came away convinced that the effort must continue. National resolve must be strengthened and a firm commitment made to the cause of the human rights of all persons, wherever found."

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