

**THE MOVEMENT IN DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
IN THE USSR CONTINUES**

**A CHRONICLE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
IN THE USSR**

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ern correspondents numerous instances of police harassment of young believers.

♦ A search was conducted in November in the Moscow apartment of Yury Gastev, a mathematician active in the human rights movement. Among the items seized were notes for an article in the new samizdat historical journal *Memory*.

♦ Victor Sokolov, a member of the Moscow group of Amnesty International, who married an American in June 1975 and left the USSR in November 1975, was deprived of his Soviet citizenship for actions discrediting a Soviet citizen by a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet dated September 7, 1976.

♦ Merab Kostava, a Georgian historian, has written an article on the continuing persecution of the "Meskhi-Turks" who were forcibly deported from their homes on the Georgian-Turkish border in 1944 and have not been permitted to return to Georgia from Central Asia where they were resettled. Kostava points out that many of these persons are descendants of the ancient Georgian tribe of Meskhi which was conquered by the Turks in the 16th Century and forcibly converted to the Moslem religion. They are now forced to register as "Azerbaijani" in their passports. The Soviet persecution of the Meskhi which deprives them of their true ethnic identity violates international human rights conventions. (Kostava's article with notes by Valery Chalidze is published in full in the Russian edition of *CHR* 24.)

♦ In a letter dated June 17 and addressed to his fellow writers, Mark Popovsky comments on the censorship and harassment of Soviet writers which has resulted in the degradation of Soviet literature and the emigration of more than two dozen Soviet writers. Popovsky (a member of the Writers' Union since 1961) reports that four contracts for his books were cancelled after an article appeared in a Voronezh newspaper (*Kommuna*, January 25) accusing him of circulating "forbidden" books. The complete text of Popovsky's letter has been published in the Russian edition of *CHR* 24.