

result of a 1985 meeting between President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the swap involving Anatoly Shcharansky and Karl Koecher was years in the making. Shcharansky had first run afoul of Soviet authorities in 1973 when he was refused permission to emigrate to Israel. Five years later, after vocally criticizing Moscow and joining an international dissident group, Shcharansky was tried and convicted of spying for the United States; he and President Jimmy Carter denied the charge. Shcharansky was sentenced to 13 years of prison and hard labor. After almost a decade of negotiations, the Soviets and Americans agreed to a prisoner trade that would free the Soviet Jewish activist. As officials kept media at a distance from the Glienicke, Shcharansky traveled across the snow-covered bridge in a Mercedes. The U.S. ambassador to West Germany greeted him as he approached West Berlin, saying, "President Reagan and others worked and prayed for many years for this." Shcharansky was whisked away in a waiting Israeli jet and enjoyed a heroic welcome in his newly adopted country. In exchange, the United States released Karl and Hana Koecher of Czechoslovakia. Karl had worked