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Moscow
U.S.S.R.

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September 30, 1985

We are American citizen Michael Lavigne and Soviet citizen Sonia Melnikova-Eichenvald.

Before we met in November 1984, Sonia had been a Jewish refusenik for five years. It was a terrible ordeal. Now she faces an even more tragic situation.

In April of 1985, we were married in Moscow. Perhaps with some irony the representative of the Moscow People's Council, who performed the ceremony, wished us every success, for soon after, the same Soviet authorities decided to break our family apart.

On May 10, 1985, we applied for an exit visa for Sonia to come live in America. On August 30, after three months delay, we were given an answer: No. They gave us no reason. They merely said that her leaving was "undesirable."

This refusal -- Sonia's twelfth -- was a crushing blow to us both. Not only was she denied the right to join her sister in the West, but now she would not be allowed to live with her husband in his own country.

At this moment, we do live together in Moscow, but our future is filled with uncertainty. Michael's visa is valid for only one year, and we live in constant dread of separation.

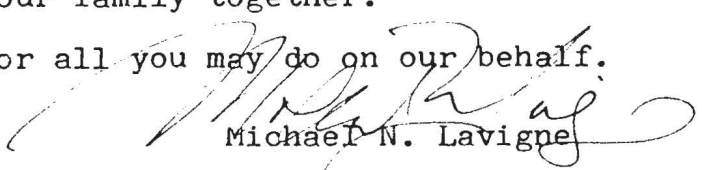
That is why we appeal to you.

We believe our best hope right now is a comprehensive settlement of the question of Americans' spouses refused exit from the Soviet Union, as well as an opening of Jewish emmigration in general. It seems probable that these questions will be discussed in Geneva in November. We want very much to be included in these talks, and for our names to be among those presented to the Soviets.

We also feel that the American Embassy here in Moscow -- which has the legal right to speak for us -- can be of help, and they will be if they are convinced we have support from home.

Please. Help us keep our family together.

Our heartfelt thanks for all you may do on our behalf.


Michael N. Lavigne

Sonia Melnikova-Eichenvald

SONIA MELNIKOVA-EICHENWALD

Ulitsa Sedova, Kor.2,kv.66
Moscow,USSR 129323
Telephone : 180-77-94

MICHAEL LAVIGNE

Resides in Moscow with Sonia
Permanent address in USA:
1529 Visalia Avenue
Berkeley, Ca. 94707

Sonia, born in 1947, an Architect by Education and Profession, first applied for a visa to emigrate to Israel in 1978. At that time she was forced to resign from her job at the employer's request. She was first refused in 1979 and since then she had applied with 6-month intervals and has been refused the total of 12 times. The only reason given for refusal was back in 1979 that father's occupation involved security clearance, but Sonia has not seen her father since she was an infant and her parents divorced. Her father has now been retired for the last 6 years.

Michael, born in 1946, was educated at Millersville State College, Pa. and the University of Chicago. In San Francisco he worked as a copywriter in Major Advertising Agencies, one of them Ogilvy and Mather.

Michael met Sonia in Moscow almost two years ago. In order to get back to Moscow last year to marry Sonia, he took a job as a nanny with an American diplomatic family. They were married on April 25, 1985. The American Embassy does not sponsor visas for Americans married to Soviet citizens, therefore Michael had to look for another job and became an administrative assistant for the New Zealand Embassy.

Sonia and Michael applied for a visa for Sonia within a week after their marriage and their application was refused in August, 1985. The Visa Department Official asked Michael to leave the room and then told Sonia that her "departure to the United States with her husband is not desirable!" When Sonia asked: "Why?" she was answered: "You know why."

Michael's visa will be expiring in August, 1986, however they have been threatened with Michael's expulsion already.

Michael N. Lavigne
New Zealand Embassy, Moscow
c/o New Zealand High Commission
The Haymarket
London, SW1 Y4TC, England

Mr. Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Reagan:

The last time I wrote to a president I was seven years old. It was to Eisenhower, and in typical fashion he answered me personally. I hope you will too, since I write to you on a matter of great personal urgency.

I am married to a Soviet Jew, Sonia Melnikova-Eichenvald. We were married in Moscow, on April 25 of this year. Soon after, we applied to the proper Soviet authorities for a visa for Sonia to join me in America. On August 30, 1985, we were officially refused.

The reason they gave was that Sonia's "going to live in the United States with her husband is not desirable." In other words, no reason at all.

Even though Sonia is a six-year "refusenik" who has received the vocal support of a number of prominent U.S. congressmen and senators, this refusal came as a terrible shock. The Soviet authorities had done nothing to block our marriage, and they even allowed me to stay in Moscow for a year and live in Sonia's apartment, which is an extraordinary privilege.

I have no idea why they refused us. Sonia has no classified knowledge, never served in the Armed Forces, has committed no crimes, and is under no financial obligations. Thus, according to Soviet law, she is perfectly eligible to obtain a visa.

Mr. Reagan, I have had to undergo the most absurd permutations just to be near my wife. In order to get to Moscow last year to marry Sonia, I abandoned my career in San Francisco and, at 38 years of age, became a nanny for a family at the American Embassy. But as Embassy rules prohibit the sponsorship of Americans married to Soviets, on my wedding day I found myself running around looking for a new sponsor. The New Zealand Embassy kindly agreed to support my visa, and I became their administrative assistant.

All this time I have lived in constant dread of being separated from my wife. And now that they have refused Sonia's visa, our separation is a virtual certainty.

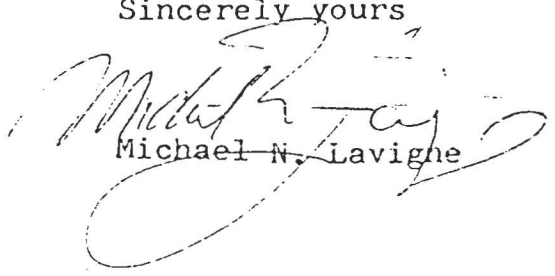
Is it fair that Sonia was first denied the right to emigrate to Israel, and now will be denied the right to live with her husband in his own country?

Mr. Reagan, I ask you to help me, to speak to Mr. Gorbachov on my behalf, as I hope you will on behalf of all spouses of Americans refused exit from the Soviet Union.

I know that when you meet Mr. Gorbachov in November you will be dealing with issues of global importance, but please do not forget Sonia and me, for the fate of individuals is not such a small thing either.

Our hopes and prayers are with you.

Sincerely yours,



Michael N. Lavigne

Michael N. Lavigne
Ulitsa Sedova, 10, Kor 2, Kv 66
MOSCOW

Mr. M.S. Gorbachov
General Secretary
Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR
The Kremlin
MOSCOW

Dear Mr. Gorbachov:

I am an American citizen currently residing in Moscow.
I am married to a Soviet citizen, Sonia Melnikova-Eichenvald.

On May 10, 1985, we applied to the proper Soviet authorities to grant Sonia a visa to join me in America. On August 30, 1985, we were informed at the Moscow office of OVIR that her application was refused. No reason was given. To our inquiries we were merely told over and over that Sonia's "joining her husband to live in the United States is undesirable."

Mr. Gorbachov, Sonia is my wife. I find it extremely desirable that she live with me -- as any man would.

The Soviet People have been very kind to me up till now, allowing me to live for a time with my wife and not hindering us in any way in our day-to-day life.

I only ask that you extend this kindness in what I know is the stated policy of the Soviet government and the wishes of its people.

A recent official Soviet report entitled "Ten Years After Helsinki" says:

Soviet law does not prohibit marriages between Soviet Citizens and citizens of other countries. Such families freely choose their place of residence in either of the countries they come from. Soviet government bodies do not only not prevent such families from making a free choice, but render necessary assistance in resolving the practical matters.

I hasten to assure you that Sonia has no classified knowledge, never served in the armed forces, has

committed no crimes, and is under no financial obligations. There is simply no reason, according to Soviet law, that Sonia should not be allowed to join me in America.

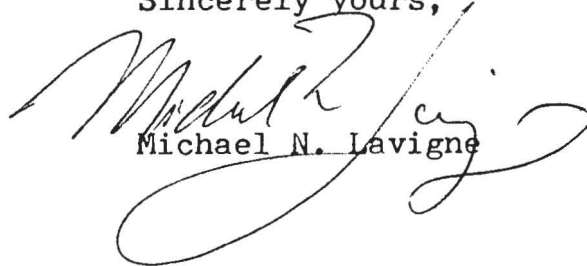
Mr. Gorbachov, in recent days you have made it clear that you try to make yourself available to the people. And that is why I appeal directly to you.

Please, give me a few minutes of your precious time so that I can make my case. I only ask you to correct an administrative error that stands in contradiction to your own stated policy and the spirit of your leadership.

I have only one wish. To live in my own country with my wife.

Please help us.

Sincerely yours,



Michael N. Lavigne

FILE DIV.

SPOUSES -

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

1/5/86

~~To Jack
Matlock
Per PROS~~

9

The President of the United States
The White House,
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

4 May, 1985

Dear Mr. President

My name is Vladimir Feltsman. I am a pianist. I won grand prizes in the International competitions in Prague (1967) and in Paris (1971). I performed with the major orchestras in the Soviet Union and abroad - in Europe and Japan. I made a number of discs. But as I continued to develop as an artist I found more and more difficult to cope with tight ideological control over my work and the absence of elementary artistic freedom.

In April 1979 I decided to emigrate from the Soviet Union but I was denied an exit permission.

All my concerts were cancelled, my records were removed from the stores, my radio and TV tapes were ordered to be destroyed. I ceased to exist as an artist.

For two years I was not allowed to play on public. Only after my interview with the "New York Times" in March 1981 I was allowed to perform inside the Soviet Union but not on the main stages.

As an artist I see no future for me in the Soviet Union. I am just a musician and music is all my life. When I am told I am not allowed to play it means I am not allowed to live.

All the requests made on my behalf by my colleges and friends were ignored by the Soviet authorities. My family and I ask for your help in our desperate situation.

Sincerely,

Vladimir Feltsman

Vladimir Feltsman

Юрий Шиханов

Yuri Shikhanovich

The President of the United States
The White House,
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

4 May, 1985

Dear Mr. President

My name is Sergei Petrov. I am a Russian, married to an American citizen Virginia Hurt Johnson. Since our wedding in February 1981, which took place in Moscow, my wife and I have been separated from each other. For four years the Soviet authorities refuse to let me join my wife in the United States.

We do not know why instead of helping us -- as they should according to Helsinki agreement -- the Soviet authorities continue to create obstacles which keep us apart. My wife is a law student; I am a free lance photographer, and we refuse to believe that our reunification is a threat to the security of the Soviet Union.

All our attempts to find out the real reason for denying me exit permission to go to the United States have produced no results. The Soviet authorities either refuse to explain or limit their answer to one word: "undesireable".

In our desperate situation, my wife and I ask for your help and support. There is little hope that our problem will find a solution all by itself.

There are less than twenty divided families who are not being allowed to join their spouses in the United States. Their situation is not essentially different from ours. The number is too small to expect the Soviet authorities to be concerned with this problem. Our suffering means nothing to them. Historically, this country views its citizens as its property. The concept that people have inalienable rights is still foreign to the Russians.

~~For me, four years of struggle for my right to be with my wife in the United States, the country of our mutual choice, has been a deeply instructive, even valuable, experience. Being unable to accept certain positions of the Soviet government, I proved to be a bad Russian. That gives me hope that I may become good American.~~

Sincerely,

Sergei Petrov

Sergei Petrov

USSR
125445 Moscow,
Belomorskaya 5,
block 3, apt.385
tel. 458-31-71

my wife's address:
Ms. Virginia Hurt Johnson
9095 Reynolda Station
Winston-Salem, NC 27109
tel. (919) 724-5735

march 12/82

BENEFIT FOR VLADIMIR FELTSMAN

10 East 40th Street • Suite 907 • New York, N.Y. 10016

Honorary Co-Chairpersons

Helen Hayes
Zubin Mehta
Yehudi Menuhin
Dudley Moore

RELEASE: March 3, 1982

CONTACT: Jeff Soref
(212) 686-4551

MENUHIN, MEHTA, DUDLEY MOORE AND MS. HAYES SPONSORING
SOVIET ARTIST'S DEBUT -- WITH OR WITHOUT HIM

Four internationally prominent performing artists today unveiled plans for a gala concert in Avery Fisher Hall at New York City's Lincoln Center on June 14 to mark the "American debut" of a prize-winning Soviet pianist -- although the Soviets so far have refused to say whether the pianist himself will be permitted to attend.

The violinist Yehudi Menuhin, one of the four artists chairing the concert committee, told a news conference today that plans are going ahead for the American debut of pianist Vladimir Feltsman, though repeated appeals to the Soviet government to allow Mr. Feltsman to perform in Avery Fisher Hall on June 14 have gone unanswered. Since he and his wife Anna applied for permission to emigrate to Israel in May 1979 Mr. Feltsman has been banned from performing publicly inside or outside the Soviet Union and his records have been removed from Soviet music stores.

Along with Mr. Menuhin, Zubin Mehta, Music Director of the New York Philharmonic; Dudley Moore, who has appeared as a concert pianist as well as in films; and actress Helen Hayes have agreed to chair the gala committee.

MORE

March 12 (82)

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Mr. Menuhin said that an invitation for Mr. Feltsman to perform was sent to Gosconcert, the official Soviet concert agency, on November 12, 1981, but that no response has been received. In addition, Mr. Menuhin said, a personal appeal to Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev on Mr. Feltsman's behalf also has received no reply.

Since all signs indicate that Mr. Feltsman will be unable to perform at the concert, Mr. Menuhin said, "stand-in" performances by pianist Misha Dichter and by dancer Gelsey Kirkland and a partner (to be announced) have been arranged. In addition, Ms. Hayes plans a dramatic reading. Mr. Menuhin said the names of additional performers will be released closer to the concert date.

"It is inconceivable that an artist of Vladimir Feltsman's standing is held incommunicado and music lovers in all countries are deprived of hearing his art," Mr. Menuhin said.

In prepared statements, Mr. Moore said that the pianist's treatment was "outrageous," while Ms. Hayes said she was "appalled" that the Soviet government would "detain gifted people whose talents belong to the world."

Norman Gladney Communications of New York will produce the concert. The event is co-sponsored by Gladney Communications, and by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, the nationwide coordinating body for Soviet Jewry, and the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry, which coordinates all Soviet Jewry activities in the New York area.

MORE ...

The co-sponsors say they hope the concert will help to publicize the plight of the Feltsman and other artists who wish to leave the Soviet Union, and compel the Soviet government to release them.

In a brief emotional message read by fellow pianist Misha Dichter at today's news conference, Mr. Feltsman said, "I must start concertizing again. It is my life. Inability to perform is fatal to any artist."

Mr. Feltsman, who is 30 years old, has received worldwide acclaim for his performances of music by Chopin, Schumann, Shubert and Brahms. At the age of 15, he won first prize at the Concertina International Competition in Prague, and four years later he captured first prize at the Margaret Long International Competition in Paris. The music critic of Le Figaro called him "extraordinary, brilliant," while the newspaper L'Aurore said, "He must be counted among the great musicians of the world."

In 1977, Mr. Feltsman was permitted to tour Japan, and in 1978 he returned to France for widely-acclaimed concert performances.

On May 23, 1979, Vladimir and Anna Feltsman, a biologist, applied for permission to emigrate to Israel, where Mrs. Feltsman aunt and brother live. Mr. Feltsman said that his request for an emigration visa was "not a political act in any way," but a yearning for "more artistic independence." The Feltsmans' application was refused, and Mr. Feltsman has not been allowed

MORE....

to perform publicly inside or outside the Soviet Union since.

Last year, a personal appeal for the Feltsman's release was sent to Soviet President Brezhnev by several prominent artists, including Daniel Barenboim, Mauricio Pollini and Pierre Boulez. The musicians did not receive a reply to their request.

The Executive Director of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, Jerry Goodman, who returned from a two-week fact-finding visit to the Soviet Union in January, said: "Vladimir and Anna Feltsman are people of extraordinary talent and courage. Their case typifies the terrible and tragic problems that face the 500,000 Jews who have expressed a desire to leave the Soviet Union."

According to Zeesy Schnur, the Executive Director of the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry, it is common for Jews who have applied for emigration visas to lose their jobs or to encounter serious career problems after they express a desire to leave the Soviet Union.

The proceeds from the concert will be used for a variety of activities to help the Feltsmans and other Soviet Jews.

Ticket prices for the June 14 concert will be announced at a later date, Mr. Gladney said.

Thursday, November 17, 1983

● Mr. KEMP. Mr. Speaker, today we have before us a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that Vladimir Feltsman be permitted to play in a concert at the Kennedy Center in December. The Senate is about to pass a companion bill.

It is outrageous that it should take an act of Congress to extend an invitation for a recognized artist to perform. Even then there is no assurance that Feltsman will be permitted to attend his own concert.

Vladimir Feltsman is a refusenik in the Soviet Union. Like so many other Jews, he applied for an exit visa for himself and his wife to allow them to emigrate to Israel. Like most other refuseniks, he found himself without employment and the subject of ostracism and harassment.

But in Vladimir's case, the circumstances are much more dramatic. Vladimir is an internationally renowned pianist who had won several competitions outside the Soviet Union and had begun to attract a wide following. His type of artistry knows no political boundaries.

But the Soviets think otherwise. Immediately upon his first application for emigration in 1973, his appearances outside the Soviet Union were canceled, and his appearances within the Soviet Union were limited to such nonevents as early morning children's concerts in outlying cities. Upon his marriage to biologist Anna Kagan in 1977, Feltsman was once more permitted to perform outside the Soviet Union and in Moscow, in concerts befitting his stature. He became solo pianist with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, and once more his future looked assured.

Then in 1979 both Vladimir and Anna applied to emigrate. The response was swift and crushing. His appearances were all canceled, his records were pulled from the shelves of record stores and radio stations, and his name was not permitted to be mentioned. Vladimir has retained his sense of humor throughout his travail, as indicated by his comment on the one out-of-town engagement which was not canceled: "a fluke that only goes to show that almost anything can happen in Georgia."

I had the pleasure of meeting this young man when I traveled to the Soviet Union this past summer. I was struck by his charm and his sense of humor in the face of 10 years of harassment by Soviet authorities. Then, when I sat down with the other guests to hear him play, I was impressed by his wealth of talent and vowed to do all that I could to see that his prodigious talent was not allowed to go to waste.

When I returned to the United States I got in touch with Norman Gladney, who sponsored a hugely successful concert for Feltsman at Lincoln Center last year. He obtained the engagement for Feltsman at the Kennedy Center for December 30, and I want to do everything possible to see that Feltsman is here to perform.

Gladney has had no response to his invitation sent through Gosconcert, the official Soviet agency in charge of international engagements. Once this resolution passes I intend to send it to Gosconcert in support of Gladney's invitation and hope to get a favorable reply.

An indication of the importance of the issue is the amount of support it has received. The entire House leadership signed on to the "Dear Colleague" and we received nearly 230 cosponsors. In addition to this being an important issue generally, I think much of the reason for such strong backing is due to the fact that, since Feltsman became a refusenik, he has been giving concerts in his home for friends and visitors to the Soviet Union. A visit to Feltsman's home has been the high point of visits to the Soviet Union by many Congressmen and Senators and their staff, and I know that everyone who has heard Vladimir perform has been as moved as I was, by his talent and his plight.

This is an exceptionally important case. Not only does it involve the rights of persons as guaranteed by the Helsinki Accords, but it also involves the issue of artistic freedom. Feltsman's case embodies all the elements of every refusenik case, but its repercussions are more highly visible.

We are asking, in this resolution, that Vladimir and Anna be permitted to come to the United States with their baby, Daniel, so that Vladimir may fulfill his December 30 engagement at the Kennedy Center. Even if only Vladimir himself is permitted to come, and only for the one performance, this will be a major step in the right direction. It will be a victory, and it will be a ray of hope to all other refuseniks suffering the indignities heaped upon them solely as a result of having expressed their desire to live outside the Soviet Union.

Let us give those people this ray of hope, this signal that perhaps the tide is turning, this reminder that they are not forgotten. Elie Wiesel's dramatic words express the situation exactly "Indifference to evil is evil." If we do not speak out for freedom at every opportunity, then our indifference will put out that ray of hope to those suffering in the Soviet Union and around the world; those people who rely on us as the greatest stronghold of freedom. We must take every step we can to further the cause of individual rights and freedoms, and to obtain permission for Vladimir Feltsman to perform here next month will be one more important step toward achieving our goal. ●

November 17, 1983

VLADIMIR FELTSMAN
PIANIST

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 1983

● Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, the resolution before this House today—House Concurrent Resolution 177—expressing the sense of the Congress that the Government of the Soviet Union should allow the internationally acclaimed pianist Vladimir Feltsman to travel to the United States to perform—once again focuses attention on the repressive Soviet immigration policies.

Again the Soviets have demonstrated their willful violation of the Helsinki accords. The pattern of repression that pervades the Soviet system is most clearly evidenced by the Soviet refusal to permit its own citizens to leave. Vladimir Feltsman is another tragic case of this gross and willful violation of human rights.

Feltsman enjoyed a successful career as a concert pianist, winning coveted international competitions. In the Soviet Union he was a rising star in the Soviet music world.

On May 23, 1979, Feltsman applied to emigrate to Israel. That same day radio and television studios were ordered to remove all of his tape recordings from their libraries and never play them again.

On the afternoon of the very day he was scheduled to perform in a concert with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, his name was blacked out on posters advertising the concert. Two hours before the performance, Feltsman was told his appearance had been canceled.

Since he made application to emigrate to Israel, Feltsman has been limited to performing for friends and visitors in his tiny Moscow apartment. It is tragic that his talent should be hidden, that a larger audience does not have the opportunity to share his gift.

Mr. Speaker, Feltsman has been invited to perform in the concert hall of the Kennedy Center on December 30. This is the second attempt to permit Mr. Feltsman to perform in the United States. In June 1982, Feltsman was invited to play at a concert at the Lincoln Center in New York, organized in his honor by Norman Gladney in cooperation with the National and Greater New York Conferences on Soviet Jewry. Soviet authorities, of course, did not allow Feltsman to travel to the United States then.

The passage of this resolution will once again send the message to the Soviet leaders that United States-Soviet relations are affected by how individuals are treated in the U.S.S.R. Human rights is a matter of deep concern to all Americans, and continued violation of the Helsinki agreements is not in the best interest of our long-term relations. ●

trading partners and distorted international markets.

The United States has and will continue to push for freer market systems, which we believe are of benefit to all. We have been able to sell vegetable oils and non-grain-feed ingredients to the EC on a zero tariff basis, which we paid for in concessions to the EC in earlier negotiations.

We must oppose a backtracking by the EC on these trade matters now. The Europeans should understand that we want good economic as well as political relationships with our friends across the Atlantic, and one relationship impacts upon the other.

I urge passage of the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ZABLOCKI Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution just agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT SOVIET UNION SHOULD ALLOW PIANIST VLADIMIR FELTSMAN FREEDOM TO TRAVEL WITH HIS FAMILY TO THE UNITED STATES TO PERFORM

Mr. LEVINE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Affairs be discharged from further consideration of the House concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 177) expressing the sense of Congress that the Soviet Union should allow pianist Vladimir Feltsman freedom to travel with his family to the United States to perform, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 177, legislation expressing the sense of Congress that the Soviet Union should allow pianist Vladimir Feltsman freedom to travel with his family, to the United States to perform. This timely resolution, sponsored by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KEMP), and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), again brings before the Congress, the plight of Soviet refuseniks and the freedoms of which they are deprived.

Mr. Feltsman is a world-renowned pianist, celebrated for his critically acclaimed playing in international competitions and sold-out concert halls. In

1979, he applied to emigrate to Israel. Since that time he has been denied the right to work and has been harassed continually by the Soviet authorities.

Mr. Speaker, communications organization within the United States with which many respected and responsible performers are associated, have extended a invitation to Vladimir Feltsman to perform in the United States. An application has been filed through formal channels at the Soviet Embassy in New York on behalf of Mr. Feltsman so he may travel to the United States to perform at the Kennedy Center on December 30, 1983.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to suspend the rules and pass House Concurrent Resolution 177 and signal to the Soviet Union our hope that it would respect Mr. Feltsman's basic human rights, including his right to travel, as guaranteed by the Helsinki Final Act.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 177

Whereas Vladimir Feltsman is an internationally acclaimed award-winning pianist;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman has been invited to perform in the United States on December 30, 1983, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, District of Columbia;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman, in direct consequence of his expressed desire to emigrate to Israel with his family, has had his basic human rights of freedom of travel and cultural expression routinely violated and suppressed by the Soviet Union;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman's basic human rights, as guaranteed by the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe signed at Helsinki, August 1, 1975, to which the Soviet Union is a party, have consistently been violated;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman and his family have continually been harassed as a result of their having applied for exit visas from the Soviet Union, which have been denied each time; and

Whereas the United States was born with a tradition of respect for human rights and freedom of cultural exchange: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the Government of the Soviet Union should allow Vladimir Feltsman freedom to travel with his family, to the United States to perform.

Mr. LEVINE of California. Mr. Speaker, there are many violations by the Soviet Union of human rights which deserve condemnation, and doing so publicly in a number of instances may in fact improve treatment by the Soviet Communist leadership of Soviet citizens.

One case in point is that of Vladimir Feltsman. This internationally re-

nowned musician has been refused permission to come to the United States for a performance at the John F. Kennedy Center on December 10.

In the past, Mr. Feltsman has been harassed and so has his family because of his desire to emigrate with his family to Israel.

I hope passage of this resolution will be heeded in Moscow. Congressman LANTOS is to be commended for bringing this resolution to the floor, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. KEMP) for introducing it.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEVINE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Concurrent Resolution 177.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS CONCERNING COMPLIANCE BY SOVIET UNION WITH CERTAIN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. FASCELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Affairs be discharged from further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 63) expressing the sense of the Congress concerning the compliance by the Soviet Union with certain international agreements on human rights, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

Mr. LAGOMARSINO. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, let me take this opportunity to express my full support for the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 63, with the proposed amendments. The resolution, expressing the sense of Congress that the U.S.S.R. should comply with its human rights commitments under various international agreements, addresses a very serious situation.

The Soviet Union is in violation of its responsibilities to human rights under no less than seven international agreements to which it is a party. In particular, the growing official harassment and denial of basic rights to Jewish citizens is a sobering reality.

Soviet officials have virtually choked off Jewish emigration. That government has punished Soviet Jews applying for emigration with the loss of

98TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 85

Expressing the sense of Congress on allowing Vladimir Feltsman freedom to travel.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 10 (legislative day, NOVEMBER 7), 1983

Mr. PELL (for himself, Mr. ARMSTRONG, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. MELCHER, Mr. BOSCHWITZ, Mr. RANDOLPH, Mr. SYMMS, Mr. BENTSEN, Mr. CHILES, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. METZENBAUM, Mr. HUDDLESTON, Mr. SASSER, Mr. TSONGAS, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. PERCY, Mr. GLENN, Mr. DODD, Mr. BUMPERS, Mr. INOUE, and Mr. HART) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress on allowing Vladimir Feltsman freedom to travel.

Whereas Vladimir Feltsman is an internationally acclaimed award winning pianist;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman has been invited to perform in the United States on December 30, 1983, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, District of Columbia;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman, in direct consequence of his expressed desire to emigrate to Israel with his family, has had his basic human rights of freedom of travel and cultural expression routinely violated and suppressed by the Soviet Union;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman's basic human rights, as guaranteed by the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe signed at Helsinki, August 1, 1975, to which the Soviet Union is a party, have consistently been violated;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman and his family have continually been harassed as a result of their having applied for exit visas from the Soviet Union, which have been denied each time;

Whereas the United States was born with a tradition of respect for human rights and freedom of cultural exchange: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring),* That it is the sense of the Congress that the
3 Government of the Soviet Union should allow Vladimir
4 Feltsman freedom to travel, with his family, to the United
5 States to perform.

○

98TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 177

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 18 (legislative day, NOVEMBER 14), 1983

Received; referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that the Soviet Union should allow pianist Vladimir Feltsman freedom to travel with his family, to the United States to perform.

Whereas Vladimir Feltsman is an internationally acclaimed award-winning pianist;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman has been invited to perform in the United States on December 30, 1983, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, District of Columbia;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman, in direct consequence of his expressed desire to emigrate to Israel with his family, has had his basic human rights of freedom of travel and cultural expression routinely violated and suppressed by the Soviet Union;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman's basic human rights, as guaranteed by the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe signed at Helsinki, August 1, 1975, to which the Soviet Union is a party, have consistently been violated;

Whereas Mr. Feltsman and his family have continually been harassed as a result of their having applied for exit visas from the Soviet Union, which have been denied each time; and

Whereas the United States was born with a tradition of respect for human rights and freedom of cultural exchange: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that the Gov-
3 ernment of the Soviet Union should allow Vladimir Feltsman
4 freedom to travel with his family, to the United States to
5 perform.

Passed the House of Representatives November 17,
1983.

Attest:

BENJAMIN J. GUTHRIE,

Clerk.

Soviet FASTER Presses Ahead on His Fatal Course

By JOHN F. BURNS

Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, July 21 — To those who knew him as a strong-limbed man only a short while ago, Sergei Petrov is a pitiful sight. After 49 days on a diet of water, he has lost nearly 52 pounds, nearly 30 percent of his normal weight. He complains of dizzy spells, he can barely walk unaided and he tires quickly during his almost daily sessions with reporters.

Mr. Petrov, a 29-year-old freelance photographer, is on a hunger strike seeking the right to emigrate to the United States to live with his wife, Virginia Hurt Johnson, a 23-year-old law student from Roanoke, Va. They met while Miss Johnson was a student at the Pushkin Institute in Moscow studying Russian and were married in February 1981. Both say that Soviet officials posed no objection to the union.

Now Mr. Petrov appears set on a course that could easily be fatal. Twelve days ago a senior Soviet emigration official summoned Western reporters to his office and announced that both Mr. Petrov and Yuri V. Balovlenkov, another Soviet citizen who is on a hunger strike for the right to join his American wife, had been "temporarily refused" exit visas because in the past they had "had access to information constituting a state secret."

A Friend of Americans

What sort of information that was, the Soviet official, Sergei Fadeyev, refused to say. Mr. Petrov, who became known to foreign correspondents here through his photographic work, freelancing for a number of European and American publications, has acknowledged all along that he worked in a military research institute in Moscow briefly after graduating with a degree in physics from Moscow State University in 1976.

Mr. Petrov says he was dismissed from the institute after three months and started building up an archive of photographs of old buildings that he sold to Soviet book publishers. He says that nothing he did at the research institute could reasonably be called secret.

Moreover, he points out that for several years he has had friends among Americans here and that those contacts have given him every chance he needed to disclose confidential information if that was his purpose. His marriage to an American, he says, gave him added opportunities. "So what is the difference if I am here or in the United States?" he asks, speaking a nearly fluent English that is largely self-taught.

Mr. Petrov and dozens of other Soviet citizens who have been refused permission to join their spouses in the United States, some of them for long as eight years, base their right to leave largely on the so-called Helsinki accords, signed in 1976, that committed the Soviet Union, as well as 34 other nations, to a number of steps designed to promote harmony, among them the reunification of divided families.

Some Join Protest Groups

Over the years, those wishing to leave have adopted a variety of tactics. Some, believing that becoming an irritant to Soviet authorities is the best policy, join protest groups. A few others are believed to cooperate quietly with the authorities, feeding tidbits of information to the K.G.B., the state security agency, in return for favorable consideration of their applications.

Mr. Petrov seems to belong to neither group. He has said repeatedly that he has "no desire to change the Soviet Union, only to leave it," and he has joined none of the protest groups.

He avoids the condemnations and categorizations that are the refuge of those who have rejected everything



United Press International

Sergei Petrov and his wife, Virginia Hurt Johnson, photographed Tuesday at his Moscow apartment.

"most of them never think about such things. They think only about what Soviet society has taught them to think — how to advance up the ladder of privilege, how to get ahead and amass their share of Western consumer items like clothes and stereos. If they have those, they don't care for justice."

One friend who discussed the hunger strike with him before he began counseled against it, arguing that it was an illogical step for a clear-thinking man to take since Soviet authorities were unlikely to give in and he would ultimately be forced to start eating again. He smiled, and pointed to the archway leading from the foreigners-only building where he was a frequent visitor.

"You speak to me of logic," he said, "but out there is a society that, for me, has become totally illogical. I have no job, and they will not give me one. They deny me the right to express myself through my work, and they deny me the right to seek a future elsewhere. Above all, they deny me the right to live with the woman I love, and to have a family. In the face of all this, you ask me to act logically?"

The use of the hunger strike as a weapon assumed a compelling sense for those wishing to leave the country after Andrei D. Sakharov, the physicist and human rights campaigner, went on a 17-day fast last year and won authorization from the Kremlin for his daughter-in-law to join her husband by proxy in the United States. That concession brought on a spate of hunger strikes, including one that grouped six men and women married to foreigners, five of whom were promised visas as their fasts reached the critical stage this spring.

Timing Was Unfavorable

An individualist, Mr. Petrov declined to join that group, and he began his own fast at a time that, in retrospect, was probably a few weeks too late. When the Soviet authorities gave in to the other five, they did so shortly before a meeting here of the World Cardiology Congress, an event that drew 5,000 doctors from all over the world. Some Western consular officials believe that the Soviet authorities were determined not to inject a jarring note into the proceedings by having Russians fasting to death almost at the door of the congress.

For Mr. Petrov, persisting now has an air of hopelessness about it, since

fast reached an advanced stage last December. On that occasion medical men, assisted by the K.G.B., moved into the Sakharovs' apartment in the provincial city of Gorky and took them to a hospital. The sequence suggested a readiness to force-feed the couple, a step that became unnecessary when their daughter-in-law, Lisa Alekseyeva, was allowed to leave.

Forced hospitalization may seem more attractive to officials in light of Mrs. Petrov's departure from the country today, after only four days here on the visa that Soviet authorities expedited after refusing her husband's application to leave. The couple said they had reached the decision to part at the insistence of Mr. Petrov, who said that remaining together as his strength faded had become "very painful." A doctor from a local clinic who visited him last Friday told Mr. Petrov that his condition then was already "dangerous," requiring hospitalization.

Mr. Petrov, meanwhile, seems determined to press ahead with his fast. Sitting on a sofa in the apartment he shares with his mother in Moscow's northwestern suburbs, the suspenders on his jeans hanging loosely on his sunken chest, he said the hunger strike had become an act of individual assertion in a society that seeks to deny all important freedoms, and as such a vindication of his conscience. Whether the authorities give in or attempt to force-feed him, he said, is beside the point.

"I don't want to prove anything to the Soviet authorities, I want to prove something to myself," he said. "I don't want anybody to consider myself their own property. I want to live my own life. If they offered Virginia and myself the right to live in a palace here we wouldn't accept, because it would not be our choice. What I am doing is the only logical thing I can do, because it is the one thing I can do that is entirely my own."

Russian Seeking Exit to U.S. Ends 51-Day Hunger Strike

By JOHN F. BURNS
Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, July 22 — A 29-year-old Soviet freelance photographer today abandoned the 51-day-old hunger strike he had declared in support of his application to leave the country and join his American wife in the United States.

Two days ago the photographer, Sergei Petrov, held a news conference and vowed to continue going without food, if necessary until he died. But today he called the Moscow office of The Associated Press and said he was quitting the fast to spare his relatives further pain. His 65-year-old mother, Klavdiya, also ended a fast that she began in his support last week, he said.

"I decided to stop," Mr. Petrov said. "No one forced me. I took broth this morning."

His action came less than 24 hours after his wife, Virginia Hurt Johnson, left Moscow for the United States after spending four days here. Miss Johnson, a 23-year-old law student from Roanoke, Va., had said she was leaving with her husband's encouragement because neither of them wanted her to see him die.

Sees No Right to Continue

"Probably during the last few days I realized how much it was costing everyone who loves me," Mr. Petrov said. "I don't think I have a right to continue."

Mr. Petrov's decision leaves only one other hunger striker persisting in his effort to win the right to join his wife abroad. Yuri V. Balovlenkov, 33, said he would continue his 18-day-old fast. He started it in May, abandoned it after 42 days when he believed he had an official's promise of an exit visa but then began fasting again on July 5 when the visa was not forthcoming.

On July 9 a senior official of the Moscow visa office summoned Western reporters and said both Mr. Petrov and Mr. Balovlenkov had been "temporarily refused" exit visas because they possessed state secrets. Earlier, four other members of a "divided families" group to which Mr. Balovlenkov belonged had been granted visas after a joint hunger strike that attracted widespread attention in the West. Only one

of the four, Andrei Frolov, has left, and he is now in Chicago.

Soviet officials have declined to characterize the secret information that Mr. Petrov and Mr. Balovlenkov are said to possess. Mr. Petrov worked briefly in 1976 at a military research institute, and Mr. Balovlenkov had been employed as a computer programmer. But both men have said that the official stand is a pretext and that the real reason is that the Kremlin had ordered that there be no further concessions to hunger strikers.

The spate of fasts began after the successful hunger strike late last year by Dr. Andrei D. Sakharov, the physicist and human rights campaigner, and his wife, Yelena Bonner. After 17 days the two were forcibly removed to a hospital, and soon afterward officials announced that their daughter-in-law, Lisa Alekseyeva, in whose behalf the fast had been called, would be permitted to join her husband in the United States.

When Mr. Petrov and Mr. Balovlenkov were denied visas, the Soviet official involved said their wives would be permitted to join them in Moscow and take jobs. Both rejected the offer, but Elena Balovlenkov, a nurse from Baltimore, arrived here with the couple's 2-year-old daughter and began a round of calls on officials in the hope of persuading them to change their ruling.

She said today that officials at the visa office had confirmed their original decision and that there appeared to be little else she could do.

Russian's Wife Optimistic

ROANOKE, Va., July 22 (UPI) — The wife of Sergei Petrov said here today that she was optimistic she and her husband would eventually be reunited.

Virginia Hurt Johnson said her husband was mentally and physically well despite losing more than 50 pounds. She said he had told her by telephone that his first meal since June 2 consisted of apple juice and a bowl of broth.



Associated Press, United Press International

LONDON: Policemen search for a garden that arrived for a garden both II and members of Royal Army July 9 intrusion by a man. At left, Christopher Hagon, two women mourning as a from the Queen's Household site of Tuesday's bombing in of their comrades.



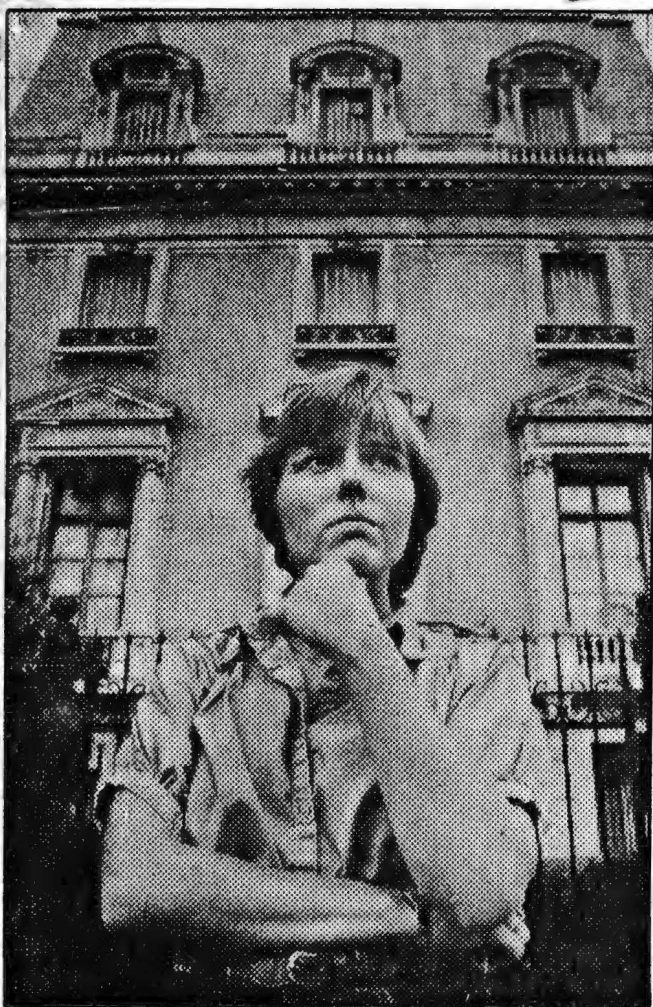
Trip, Denies India Is in Soviet Camp

trying to do and what are the tre obstacles and difficulties." whether she believed her talks help improve relations with the States, she said:

with the Soviets, and that does not prevent us from being friends with — trying to be friends with — China or with the United States, and we don't think it should come in the way of other friendships."

leaders and is expected to seek to encourage American investment in India, lagging because of bureaucratic controls and perceived hostility against private enterprise.

She said India was trying to improve



By Gerald Martineau — The Washington Post

Virginia Johnson came to the Soviet Embassy to plead with officials.

Love, Soviet Style

U.S. Wives Get Temporary Visas To Visit Soviet Hunger Strikers

By Michael Isikoff

Washington Post Staff Writer

It began as a love story, Soviet style. Virginia Hurt Johnson was an American college student in Moscow on a study program. Sergei Petrov was a handsome and free-spirited free-lance photographer. They met at a dinner party, a group of young intellectuals talking about Pushkin and other giants of Russian literature.

"I was mesmerized," recalled Johnson, a 23-year-old law student from Roanoke, Va.

Their romance was cut short six months later at the airport, two days after an assembly-line marriage at the Moscow registrar's office. Johnson remembered that she was in tears, saying goodbye. "Suddenly a big arm grabs my shoulders and this gruff voice says, 'That's enough,' and drags me away," she says. "And that was the last time I saw him."

Now Petrov is starving to death in Moscow, in the last stages of a hunger strike he began 46 days ago to protest the Soviet government's refusal to grant him an exit visa. His case and that of another hunger striker, Yuri Balovlenkov, have attracted international attention in recent days and become the latest irritants in U.S.-Soviet relations. The State Department and several U.S. congressmen have lodged protests with the Soviet government, urging that the strikers be allowed to emigrate under the 1975 Helsinki accords, which require that governments aid family reunification.

See WIFE, C3, Col. 1

U.S. Wives Allowed to Visit Soviet Husbands on Hunger Strike

WIFE, From C1

But the Soviets have dug in their heels. Last Saturday, they called in foreign correspondents to denounce Western interference in Soviet internal affairs and reiterate that the fasters' visas would not be granted "for reasons of state."

Johnson came to Washington on Friday in an attempt to obtain a temporary visa from the Soviet Embassy so she could join her husband. Her request and a similar one by Elena Balovlenkov of Baltimore were granted.

Balovlenkov, 29, left Baltimore Friday night on what she said was a mission to persuade her husband to abandon his protest fast. Yesterday, she was reunited with her husband, 33, in Moscow and he saw their 2-year-old daughter for the first time.

Johnson, who said she wishes that her husband also would end his fast, was to leave here for Moscow late yesterday.

She said that Petrov is a skilled photographer who is popular among American diplomats and correspondents in Moscow. Now, however, her 29-year-old husband is bedridden in the apartment he shares with his mother. Johnson said that, against the urging of his friends, he has refused all food and drink, save water. She added that Petrov, who is six-foot-one and weighed 180 pounds when he began his fast, has lost more than 40 pounds.

For six weeks, Johnson waited helplessly

in North Carolina, where she had been working for the summer. She said that she called Petrov nightly, but that his voice grew fainter with each call and he was becoming less and less coherent. An articulate and composed woman, Johnson said that when Petrov began his protest fast, the couple discussed it over the telephone. "I know it's going to be difficult for you, but I just don't want to live here anymore," Petrov told her.

"I love Sergei and I want to be with him," Johnson said in an interview in Washington on Friday. "But I know I can't tell him what to do. I've always trusted his judgment. I don't think it's my place to tell him to subject himself to the life he has there, the repression he has there, the humiliation he has there."

"They just want to teach him a lesson, to break his spirit, to humble him. But he would rather die than play their silly games."

The Soviets' tough stand on the Petrov and Balovlenkov cases is as baffling to U.S. officials as it is painful to the two men's wives. Every year there are from 15 to 20 marriages between Soviet and U.S. citizens and in two-thirds of the cases the exit visas are granted routinely, U.S. officials said. Yet there is no apparent thread that runs through the remaining cases in which problems are encountered.

Eight years ago, for example, Woodford McClellan, a University of Virginia history professor, married Irina Astakhova, a low-

level secretary and translator at a Soviet think tank. Astakhova has been applying and reapplying for a visa since 1974, only to be denied on security grounds. She and McClellan write regularly, but haven't seen each other since.

"God, this security stuff is an absolute fabrication," said McClellan, 48, who still waits in Charlottesville. "I think they just pulled a name out of a hat."

So it appears with Petrov. "It's mysterious to us," said one State Department official, referring to the case. "They've been playing hardball. We've talked to them repeatedly through diplomatic channels, the White House has expressed an interest in it. But their question is, 'What's in it for us?'"

One thing appears clear to U.S. officials: Petrov is no security risk. The alleged reason for refusing him an exit visa is that five years ago he worked briefly as a physicist at a research institute. The institute does classified research, but employees are not given access to military secrets for six months and Petrov left after three months. "It sounds pretty flimsy to us," the State Department official said.

When Johnson first arrived in Moscow in August 1980 she was 21, a Russian-language major from Duke University. The dinner party at which she and her future husband met came two weeks later. She said that the tall, blue-eyed Petrov immediately attracted her attention.

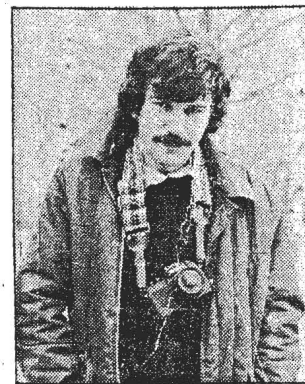
"As a rule, men in Russia are pretty chauvinistic," she explained. "You go to a dinner party and men usually sit in the dining room and eat, while the women do all the work. The first thing I noticed about Sergei is that he was the only man who came into the kitchen and helped the women."

They struck up a friendship. Petrov would guide her around Moscow, taking her to museums and cafes. "I was very platonic at first," she said. "I never told him, 'Hey, I think you're really cute.'"

By November, they were in love. "I asked him to marry me," Johnson said. They wore blue jeans to the ceremony. On March 10, two weeks after Johnson flew back to Duke, Petrov first applied for an exit visa and his trouble began.

The normal waiting period for exit visas from the Soviet Union is three months. On August 14, Johnson said, Petrov called OVIR, the visa office, and was told that his application had been denied two months earlier, although nobody had bothered to tell him. He was told to wait for six months and reapply.

In January, Petrov was summoned to OVIR again and told that his second application had been denied — even though he had yet to file it. He was expelled from the Soviet photographers' union, leaving him without work. On March 10, Petrov wrote to Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev renouncing his citizenship on the grounds that his rights



Sergei Petrov in Moscow last March, before fast.

under the Soviet constitution had been denied. He began his fast on June 2.

"I don't think anybody in this country can begin to understand what life is like in that country, particularly for somebody as smart and intelligent as my husband," Johnson said. "When Sergei and I were together, we used to have a standard joke: There's one question that you can never ask in this country and that question is, 'Why?'"

A Self-Inflicted Soviet Reputation

By Anthony Lewis

MOSCOW — The thin young man sat on the edge of his bed talking calmly about the prospect of his physical collapse. When I saw him on July 7, Sergei Petrov had had nothing to eat or drink except water for 36 days. He was on a hunger strike for the right to leave the Soviet Union and join his American wife.

"It's impossible for me to believe I am so important that I must be kept here as a national treasure," he said. "I am not a dissident. I don't want to change Soviet society or reform it. I think that is an impossible task.

"I just don't want to have anything to do with it."

Two days later, in a highly unusual move, an official of the Soviet office for exit visas held a press conference. He told foreign correspondents that neither Petrov nor another hunger striker, Yuri Baloytenkov, would be given visas. He charged that the United States, in its concern for separated families, was interfering in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union.

When people in the West care about the fate of a Petrov, Soviet officials often suggest that the real motive is provocation, a desire to worsen relations with the U.S.S.R. If they believe that, they are making a bad mistake. It is the refusal to let husbands and wives live together where they wish — an arbitrary, pointless refusal — that is provocative.

There are about 70 marriages a year between Soviet and American citizens. Most of the Soviets are allowed to leave without much fuss. But in a few cases the answer is a long, slow, Kafkaesque no.

Eight years ago Irina Astakhova married a visiting American professor, Woodford McClellan of the University of Virginia. She has been repeatedly denied an exit visa, officials

suggesting at various times that her case was "complicated" or involved "security." She has had no regular job since 1975, and ekes out a living giving private English lessons.

Security was also given as a reason for refusing to let Petrov go. Now 29, he got a college degree in physics in 1976. He was assigned to a military research institute but was dismissed after three months — before, he says, he got into any secret work. In any event, that was six years ago.

Since 1976 Petrov has been a freelance photographer, selling pictures to Soviet book publishers and others. His speciality is old architecture, and he has built up a reputation as a talented photographic artist.

"It's one of the few professions in the Soviet Union that gives you an independent social position," Petrov said. What others were there? I asked. "Painter. Criminal."

He met Virginia Hurt Johnson of Roanoke, Va., when she was an exchange student in Moscow in 1980. They were married in Moscow in February, 1981, and he applied for an exit visa. All of his book contracts were immediately canceled.

Petrov lives with his mother in a small apartment on the outskirts of Moscow. When I saw him, he had lost about 40 pounds.

He could no longer even drink much water, he said, because his kidneys were starting to fail.

"I started this hunger strike not just to scare people," he said, "but because I couldn't bear this life any more. I am not going to stop unless they let me go — not even if they take me to a hospital by force."

The Soviet bureaucracy is evidently

worried about the hunger strike tactic. Last fall the government gave way to Andrei Sakharov, the great dissident banished to Gorki when he struck to get an exit visa for his daughter-in-law. More recently, a group of six Russians married to Americans started fasting to apply pressure for exit visas; eventually all were promised visas. But one, Balovlenkov, went back on strike when officials broke the promise and said he would not be allowed to leave. Petrov has acted on his own.

Why does the Soviet government want to make an issue of this handful of people? None is by any stretch of the imagination a threat to the state. All they want to do is live with their wives or husbands. The only thing that has given them importance is the refusal to let them do so.

The policy is especially puzzling because it encourages the extreme anti-Soviet view in the United States and inside the Reagan administration. The American division is obvious nowadays. There are those who want to preach at the Soviet Union and not negotiate. There are others — I believe they are the realists — who do not like the Soviet system but think negotiation is essential in a nuclear world. That argument is hard to make when the Soviets show such contempt for their Helsinki undertakings on divided families.

Petrov said Soviet bureaucrats "don't need a reason to refuse us, but they do need a reason to let us go." Higher officials in Moscow should surely understand one reason to stop tormenting Petrov and the others married to foreigners: The policy makes it harder to accept the Soviet government as a serious one, motivated by rational self-interest.

The New York Times.

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Dear _____:

I am responding to your (date) letter enclosing correspondence from _____ regarding the unsuccessful efforts of _____ to obtain permission to emigrate from the Soviet Union.

We, too, are concerned over the unwillingness of the Soviet Union to respect basic human rights, such as freedom of movement. We are particularly dismayed in light of its commitment in the Helsinki Final Act "to deal in a positive and humanitarian spirit with the applications of persons who wish to be reunited with members of their family."

The U.S. Government attaches great importance to the cases of separated spouses. We welcome the recent Soviet decision to resolve a number of longstanding separation cases. We have made it unequivocally clear in our bilateral exchanges with the Soviets that, if they are serious about improving U.S.-Soviet relations, they must resolve the separated spouse cases. The cases are few in number and their resolution poses no threat to the Soviet state.

We regularly present a list of longstanding unresolved cases to high-level Soviet officials. _____ is on that list. We will continue to pursue vigorously this and other unresolved cases until the separated spouses are permitted to reunite.

If we can be of assistance to you in this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Drafted:EUR/SOV/SOBI:KMhillas

01/31/86 Ext. 72248 No. _____

Cleared:EUR/SOV/SOBI:SLysyshyn

EUR/SOV:BLPascoe

EUR:MPalmer

H:LMurray

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