

P.O. Box 471 Cooper Station
New York, N.Y. 10003

April 17, 1974

TO ALL ORGANIZERS

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is the text of an appeal for protest actions on behalf of victimized dissidents in the Soviet Union and East Europe. The appeal was issued by the well-known Soviet dissidents, Pavel Litvinov and Andrei Sakharov, by Jiri Pelikan of Czechoslovakia, and by Ken Coates and Chris Farley of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. This appeal was reported on in the April 19, 1974, Militant on page 15.

The call for protests on May 7 on behalf of Grigorenko should be considered by YSA locals. Where possible, campus meetings, local demonstrations, or other activities can be organized, preferably on a united front basis together with other radical organizations and social protest groups. In several cities left-wing organizations already exist that have been carrying on defense activity on behalf of Soviet dissidents; where possible, we should work with such groups. The political premise of any activity that we engage in on behalf of Grigorenko or other dissidents is that it can have no connection with anticommunist, pro-Washington politics.

The appeal for actions on May 7 can become the basis for increasing our activity in this area, and for meeting and working with left-wing Soviet and East European exiles open to our ideas.

Comradely,

Rich Finkel

Rich Finkel
YSA National Office

Bertrand Russell Peace
Foundation Ltd.

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Political persecution and attacks on civil liberty have not been confined to one country or block of countries, and in recent years they have been increasingly common and more intensive. Radicals, humanitarians, consistent advocates of democratic ideas, socialists and communists have found themselves protesting about repression in every continent and almost every country.

It is particularly regrettable that in the countries of Eastern Europe, and especially in the USSR and Czechoslovakia, the tendency to solve political disputes by administrative and repressive measures has become more acute. Many elementary liberties have once more been put in question. The incarceration of Major General Grigorenko in a mental hospital and the forced confinement of Vladimir Bukovsky, as well as the imprisonment of numerous other people such as Plyusch, Moroz, Svetlichny and Lubarski in the USSR, and also the heavy penalties against Milan Hubl, Jaroslav, Sabata, and Gerzy Muller among many others in Czechoslovakia, are famous cases in point. Like peace, civil liberties are indivisible, oppression in a country diminishes humanity everywhere. Oppression in a country with a socialist constitution is a particular challenge to the radical conscience of the rest of the world, since such countries aim themselves to be both democratic and advanced in the field of civil rights. To all those human beings who feel a sympathy for the future of socialism in this sense, and to all genuine democrats, we address this appeal.

We are calling for a world-wide participation by socialists, communists, democratic and humanitarian organizations and individuals in three days of protests about the repression of civil liberties in socialist countries. The first of these we propose to designate Grigorenko Day, which will be fixed on 7th May 1974, the anniversary of the imprisonment of Major General Grigorenko. On that day we would urge a world-wide initiative of protest meetings and petitions in solidarity with Major General Grigorenko and all other victims of politically motivated incarceration in mental hospitals and prisons.

On the second day, 27th November 1974, which is the anniversary of the arrest of Sabata and Muller, and on the third day, 29th March 1975, which is the anniversary of the imprisonment of Vladimir Sukovsky, we propose similar endeavors.

We appeal to men of goodwill throughout the world to endorse and support this appeal.

Signed:

Pavel Litvinov - on behalf of the Soviet Initiative Group for
Human Rights

Ken Coates and Chris Farley - on behalf of the Bertrand Russell
Peace Foundation

Jiri Pelikan - for the Collective of Listy, the journal of the
Czechoslovakian Socialist Opposition

Andrei Sakharov