

# F.A.S. PUBLIC INTEREST REPORT

Formerly the FAS Newsletter

THIS ISSUE:  
ORGANIZATIONAL  
REFLECTIONS

Vol. 29, No. 2

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## ORGANIZATIONAL STEPS AND MISSTEPS

By June, 1970, FAS had been without a full-time Director for more than 20 years, and it was housed in a dingy office at 2025 I Street far from the Capitol where legislation was debated. It was managed on a part-time basis by a thrifty and independent-minded woman who had her own ways and wanted things left as they were. She was astounded at the improvident sizes of the emerging telephone bills and had the temerity to complain about it.

She was replaced by a half-time secretary; we could afford no more than that. And the newsletter editor who was being paid \$75 per newsletter to reprint articles of interest and statements of the Council promptly quit as well, recognizing that the new order would not find her approach to newsletter production acceptable.

The single most important organizational event of that summer was convincing the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) to rent us a large room on the ground floor of their extremely well-located building: literally across the street from the Senate. It was a room from which SANE had just exited, and it could hold up to four people in a kind of bull pen. The rent was \$100 a month.

### Life Insurance

Among the first visitors were the two representatives of the Union Central Life Insurance Company which had, by then, been insuring a few hundred of our members for about 8 years. Learning of a changing of the guard, they were eager to know if I would continue the group policy. They offered me a free policy not too deftly. I declined.

It was important to know, however, at what intervals the organization might expect to receive dividends of some kind from the policy if the actuarial experience was favorable. These occasional windfalls were later to be extremely important to FAS survival. It developed that the company had been holding out on FAS, holding larger reserves than necessary. It disgorged several thousand critical dollars.

Subsequently, in Ohio for closer examination, I relearned how loath life insurance companies are to give information to outsiders. Having worked as a student actuary one summer two decades ago for Equitable Life Assurance, I was able to penetrate some of the fog.

I urged the company to offer much higher ceilings on individual policies in the hope of getting larger dividends on the larger premiums. The company agreed. Weeks later, at the last minute, I cautiously asked to see the formula by which dividends were determined. Refused the right to see it, I demanded its functional form, i.e., the formula with the constants omitted. A minor calculus exercise established my worst fear. Higher insurance lim-

its would mean smaller dividends. (In effect, the insurance company keeps much larger reserves if any single policy can produce a large claim.) I had been about to kill a golden goose by urging overproduction.

The visit to Ohio had one good effect. It confirmed that the only other source of income to FAS (besides its dues) was indeed a kosher source. In an age of CIA and other conduits, FAS was clean.

### The Issues

The newsletter had previously been a potpourri of clippings buttressed with occasional statements of the National Council, for the most part generated at its annual meeting. I began to write four-page newsletters and our mail indicated that member interest was rising sharply. By the end of 1971, the newsletter had moved to better and colored paper and had become more often six pages than four. But it had no coherent style.

Beginning in January, 1972, I began to devote each newsletter to a different subject and to produce "special issues" because the old newsletter was not of much use on Capitol Hill. It reported to the membership but, as an educational tool for Congressional or Executive Branch officials, it had insufficient substance.

Thus began the pattern of special issues headed by editorials in bold face, endorsed by experts, Executive Committee members or Council officials.

### How the Newsletter Works

How was it possible to secure the passage of monthly editorials through the Council or Executive Committee

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## SOME RELEVANT REMINISCENCES

The December Council meeting was the fifth under my stewardship and, during that same month, the FAS's million dollar endowment search came to an unfortunate end — at least for the moment. In light of this failure, it seemed a useful time to relay some relevant reminiscences which reveal about where FAS development is. It seemed easiest to do this by recounting related "steps and missteps" as your faithful staff perceived them. Premier Chou En Lai's death persuaded me to reveal two other incidents that may be of interest to FAS members and to share with you a photograph I deeply prize.

During the second week of January, an interesting letter was received from V. F. Turchin (whose story and photograph appear in the December Report) and which bear on FAS efforts to assist Soviet scientists. The letter is printed on pages 4-7. JJS □

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and to write on such subjects in six- or eight-page newsletters?

Not easy, but not so impossible as it might seem. In the first place, we followed the rule of consulting with all persons on the Council who were known to be experts in the area under discussion. Sponsors of an age and inclination to participate in detailed areas are consulted as well. Leading experts (within the organization and without) were consulted also. By the time it came to drafting the editorial it was clear what the organization's leading experts and elected officials thought. I drafted the editorial accordingly and mailed it to the ruling bodies asking for comments; the comments, taken usually by phone, were negotiated and incorporated subsequently.

Guided by the incisive comments of our splendidly informed membership, and pointed to the material most rewarding to study, I found it feasible to digest what was known about the subject at issue in the 30 days allotted. Written simultaneously for Congressmen on the one hand, and for an interdisciplinary membership on the other, the newsletter need not contain more than an intelligent analytical generalist can assimilate within a reasonable time. Eschewing basic research, the newsletter has a certain place in the ecology of knowledge accumulation and dispersion. That niche is probably the missing link in the whole chain of reaching Congress.

The basement swelled with information, to the wonder of visiting Council members. And increasingly, FAS is able — when approached on any subject — to note that it has a newsletter on that subject which the inquirer can read. This has been extremely useful. The interest of Capitol Hill denizens shifts rapidly and unpredictably; pre-packed and fully digested information is very handy. And six to eight pages is often about all anyone busy really wants to read.

#### How Large a Self-Sustaining Mass?

I assumed that the organization would eventually become large enough to have several in-residence experts on Capitol Hill. In effect, I planned to backstop the organization until it could get large enough to be more securely propped up.

At first, the membership rose more rapidly than one could have hoped; it quadrupled in three years. But then the size of the pool of scientists from which our members spring seemed to become the limiting factor. And as the dropoff increased from a larger membership, it became more difficult even to stay even. Like Common Cause, we had grown rapidly and then reached self-saturating limits, at a few percent of the eligible mass.

#### How the Building was Bought

By late 1973, it was getting awfully cramped in the one room office. Besides myself and the secretary, we then had Mary Fillmore working on the now discontinued FAS Professional Bulletin and, sometimes, an assistant working on promotion.

I conceived the idea of buying our own building and started looking around. At about this time, we interviewed and then hired a secretary who — to our bemusement — lived two blocks away in a townhouse which she and her architect mate were renovating for resale. It was also commercially zoned (a miracle and critical) and redesigned with great flair. The architect offered to sell the house for \$65,000; I began to see if I could raise the

money. At that time, we had only two persons who had given us as much as \$5,000. One agreed to make another \$5,000 contribution.

Through an old and loyal member, I contacted his wealthy brother and secured a pledge of \$10,000. A weekend of calling other prospects was to no avail. But a late night Monday phone call produced an agreement to provide another \$5,000. We were getting closer, but no mortgages were available at that time in Washington.

We suddenly discovered that commercial zoning was not enough; the building had to fulfill commercial standards for habitation. Did it have enough exits, fire-enclosed stairs under various circumstances, etc? We asked the District of Columbia Government to confirm that all was o.k. but the official visit produced only silence. The owner-architect assured us that there would be no problems. But we prodded the District to make sure.

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Director: JEREMY J. STONE

The Federation of American Scientists is a unique, non-profit, civic organization, licensed to lobby in the public interest, and composed of 7,000 natural and social scientists and engineers who are concerned with problems of science and society. Democratically organized with an elected National Council of 26 members, FAS was first organized in 1946 as the Federation of Atomic Scientists and has functioned as a conscience of the scientific community for more than a quarter century.

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- |                                   |                                   |
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\*Nobel Laureates

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We decided to assume that the membership would raise the rest of the funds and were about to sign a binder that would give us a few months to see if the assumption was correct when an ambiguous letter did suddenly arrive from the District. It indicated problems. The deal began to come apart when I visited the District Housing Headquarters and smelled corruption. The agent in charge of examining our projected house was one with which his superior had had constant problems. Such agents, I learned, are often bribed to delay sending notices of required repairs until sales are consummated. Our architect had regular dealings with this office. It became increasingly apparent that we were about to be hornswoggled.

Unsure whether to persevere or how, we conceived a sensible scheme. Locating all houses commercially zoned on Capitol Hill, we hired an unemployed student to dig out of the bowels of the District records the names of all owners. We robotyped a letter to each one and asked whether they would sell to scientists. There was, essentially, only one reply — the perfect house, but with an asking price of \$125,000. It seemed hopeless. There seemed some softness, however, in the owners' response, and we paid \$100 to have it assessed. I arranged a late night meeting with the owner — a sweet but savvy woman hairdresser. She had mentioned that her lawyer wanted to handle it himself, and I realized that I had to move swiftly.

As I left for the evening meeting, I asked our lawyer by telephone whether I should give her \$1 as a consideration to close the deal if we agreed. He said: "\$1? Give her \$1,000." Stopping at the office, I drew up an amateurish binder, grabbed a blank Federation Fund check and walked over to the house. In hard but friendly bargaining, we agreed on \$92,500; she accepted the \$1,000. The next day, her lawyer exploded; he had wanted the commission but it was then too late for him to persuade her to put it on the open market, with himself as the agent. We had acted in the nick of time.

### **The Million Dollar Fiasco**

After an appeal to the members, \$30,000 was raised from 800 donors and the building was secured with a \$30,000 mortgage remaining, and payments only at the level that our rent had been. I was already planning on how we might fill up the building into which we moved in October, 1974.

To avoid the endlessly debilitating search for Foundation funds, I conceived the notion that we should endow chairs in three fields; environment and energy; world development; and medicine and public health. \$1,000,000 would suffice if we hired either young scientists, or eminent persons shortly after their retirement. Thus for the price of one Harvard chair, we would provide three professors. Each would be linking science to Government — a role far more important than the average chair in a university. Each professor would be working on matters which his benefactor could understand — another plus in fund raising. And the donor would receive the undiluted gratitude of all of the most humane scientists in the country; by comparison, chairs at universities are not so breathlessly received. We would also name the building for him.

Fifty of the most eminent scientists in the country were so kind, in due course, as to sign a letter urging the gift of \$1,000,000. Since we skip two newsletters in the

summer, I searched for multi-millionaires in the summer of 1974, asking them to solve the problem at a stroke. There was no success. When the fall arrived, it was necessary to go back to work.

In December, 1974, I wrote a wealthy industrialist and earlier supporter at length of our problems and subsequently, in a telephone conversation in February, he suggested that we try to locate 10 persons to donate \$100,000 each. He would become a co-chairman of the effort if I would locate an east coast co-chairman who could play a role analogous to his (that of co-chairman and donor with contacts). But finding such a co-chairman was not easy.

On March 17, I flew to Los Angeles to meet with him and asked the Federation Treasurer, Herbert F. York, to fly up from La Jolla to join in the meeting. I wanted a witness of eminence. In the meeting, I noted that I had been unable to find a suitable co-chairman but proposed that I become, myself, that co-chairman. FAS itself would try to raise half of the funds if he would try to raise the other half; could we agree that he would "undertake to raise" a dollar for every dollar we raised? He agreed immediately. I suggested that we limit his undertaking to what we could raise in the next 12 months so as to limit his liability.

For the next three months, I beat the bushes in extraordinarily many ways, even to the extent of skipping a newsletter (which was followed by a double issue). Our backer received copies of all our solicitations but said little. We offered the chairs for \$166,500 rather than \$333,000, relying upon his power to match, and we permitted the funds to be given over three tax years.

After efforts too lengthy, intense and painful to be easily remembered, much less here described, we found a Foundation prepared to support a chair in energy and environment. On July 9, we communicated this first and most important success to our backer. To my astonishment and dismay, he referred to his matching offer as a "ploy" to attract donors. A call to Herbert York, then in Stockholm, revealed that he shared my astonishment. With some difficulty, I secured an appointment with the backer and en route to Japan on July 31 met with him to discuss what to do. On reflection, he agreed that my understanding that he had "undertaken to raise" this matching amount was accurate but that he did not feel he had the responsibility to do so. This struck me as bizarre.

He agreed in any case, to discuss the matter with his accountant; it was arranged that I would call him back in a week en route back from Japan; but by then he had evidently forgotten his agreement to talk to me. A subsequent letter was ignored.

A round of phone calls to his associates revealed an extraordinary pattern of whimsical behavior in fund giving. We had been caught in a classic philanthropic trap. I apologized by letter to the trustees of our Federation Fund for my misjudgment of character and consequent waste of time.

A revised application for the \$1/6 million grant was submitted in September and rejected in December. The project was then, last month, simply dropped because — all known prospects having been misled by our original approach — we felt it was impossible to continue our search along the same line, without at least a relaxation period. □

## LETTER FROM MOSCOW

Not Quite Open Letter to the World Scientific Community  
Dear Colleagues!

I call this letter "not quite open" because I do not want it to be published by mass media; newspapers, everyone's magazines, etc. But I authorize any willing person or organization to spread it by any means inside the scientific community. The reason is not that I fear the letter will be known to the authorities in my country; it will anyway, and I am not saying here anything I am not ready to repeat in any circumstances. The reason is that I want my letter to be discussed (if it is to be discussed at all) by the scientific community without fore-running comments of the wider public.

I have just come from the city of Vilnius, where my friend, biologist Sergei Kovalev, was tried and sentenced to seven years of imprisonment in strict regime labour camps to be followed by three years in exile. Ten years in the hole — this figure speaks for itself, but only if you know the conditions in Soviet penal institutions (and you might read, for example, a recent report of Amnesty International, "Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions") can you fully estimate the hardness of the sentence. Take also into account that Dr. Kovalev is not young at all, and has a serious disease. My state of mind now is not, probably, the best one to write open letters, but I hope you will forgive me some not much pleasing words you'll find here.

Sergei Adamovich Kovalev was born in 1930, graduated from Moscow University in 1954. He has about 60 published scientific works — on the properties and interaction of nervous cells, on electrophysiology of muscle tissue, on the properties of cellular membranes, and other questions. Dr. Kovalev developed a new "geometrical" approach to the study of systems of interacting cells. These scientific results are well-known; they were discussed and esteemed by such prominent specialists as Dr. S. Weldmann (Switzerland), Dr. E. Coraboeuf (Canada) and Nobel Prize winner Dr. B. Katz (England).

Dr. Kovalev is Russian and lives in Moscow. Why then was he tried in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania?

Officially, because one of the charges against him is connected with Lithuania: the use of a samizdat Lithuanian journal in compiling "The Chronicle of Current Events" — a Moscow samizdat journal of political repressions in the USSR. In fact, of course, the trial was taken to Vilnius in order to keep it as far as possible from foreign correspondents and Kovalev's friends. But there is one more thing that connects Sergei Kovalev with Lithuania, which may have played a role and which is of a symbolic significance.

Several years ago, a Soviet sailor, Simas Kudirka, a Lithuanian, escaped from his ship to an American ship when they happened to be close to one another in the sea, and asked for political asylum. The captain of the American ship, acting on his understanding of detente, betrayed Kudirka to his Soviet counterpart, notwithstanding the entreaties of the poor fellow.

First of all, Kudirka was brutally beaten up before the eyes of somewhat shocked Americans. Later, on dry land, he was tried and imprisoned under Article 64 of the Criminal Code, which regards flight abroad or refusal to return from abroad to the USSR as an act of treason.

The story shocked international public opinion and



*Biologist Sergei Kovalev*

produced much noise, which created the conditions necessary to effectively help Simas Kudirka. Sergei Kovalev gave much aid to his mother. It was he who managed to establish contact between the mother and the U. S. embassy in Moscow. As a result, Kudirka was finally permitted to leave the country.

The charges against Kovalev were: the manufacturing and circulation of *The Chronicle of Current Events*; a number of statements in defence of Soviet prisoners of conscience; participation in the press-conference on 30 October 1974, where some documents on the conditions in Soviet prisons and labour camps were passed to foreign correspondents; and an attempt to reproduce the *Gulag Archipelago*. He was indicted and convicted under Article 70 of the Criminal Code, which states: (as translated in the above-mentioned Amnesty Report):

"Agitation or propaganda carried on for the purpose of subverting or weakening the Soviet regime or of committing particular, especially dangerous crimes against the state, or the circulation, for the same purpose, of slanderous fabrications which defame the Soviet state and social system, or the circulation or preparation or keeping, for the same purpose, of literature of such content, shall be punished by deprivation of freedom for a term of 6 months to 6 years, with or without additional exile for a term of 2 to 5 years, or by exile for a term of 2 to 5 years".

The prosecution made a helpless attempt to demonstrate the falseness of the information published in the *Chronicle*. After almost a year of investigation, only seven episodes could be selected for the courtroom out of 694 episodes described in issues 28-34 of the *Chronicle*, which were imputed to Kovalev. The prosecution was at the strongest in this episode: The *Chronicle* reported that a certain Gudas had been home-searched, and that during the search about two thousand prayer-books were confiscated and he had been beaten up. Summoned as a witness, Gudas confirmed that the prayer-books were confiscated during the search, but denied that he had been beaten. In another episode, the prosecution charged the *Chronicle* with distorting the conditions under which G. Plyushch is kept in psychiatric hospital and the reasons for his detention. A psychiatrist from the hospital repeated the official version that Plyushch was mentally ill,

but refused to specify how the illness manifests itself and why it requires detention and compulsory treatment. The larger part of the information of G. Plyushch was given to the Chronicle by his wife. Kovalev demanded that she be summoned as a witness to the court. The court refused, on the ground that "there is enough evidence from the psychiatrists".

Generally, not one witness demanded by Kovalev was summoned to the court. In no episode was an attempt made by the prosecution to show that a possible divergence from the truth was not a mistake but just slander. No attempt was made to demonstrate that the statements in defence of political prisoners imputed to Kovalev or the information passed during the press-conference contained slander or even diverged from the truth. All this was simply declared slander. No proof was given that Kovalev acted for the purpose of "subverting or weakening the Soviet regime" as is required by Article No. 70. In fact, Kovalev made a statement in the court that he had not had this purpose.

Dr. Kovalev was not allowed to have the defence counsel he had chosen, after which he refused to have any defence counsel at all. In the court hearing, after the witnesses had given their testimonies, they were forced to leave the courtroom in violation of the procedure. Kovalev demanded that those witnesses who wished to stay in the courtroom (there were several of his friends among the witnesses, I among them) should be allowed to do so and that other friends, including Academician Sakharov, who came from Moscow for the trial, also should be allowed in. Otherwise, he said, he would boycott the court. The witnesses were finally admitted but the friends were not, although, as I could see, there were unoccupied places in the hall. Kovalev insisted, and, as a result, was removed from the courtroom. So the hearing went on in the absence of both the defence counsel, and the defendant himself. There was no last word of the defendant.

You know the result already.

The state prosecutor said in his speech: "Kovalev and others slanderously asserted that in our country people were fired for political reasons".

You'll be able to imagine what sort of feeling I had listening to this accusation when I tell you something of my own experience.

I was born in 1931, graduated from Moscow University as theoretical physicist, and in 1953-64 worked in the field of the theory of nuclear reactors and neutron scattering. Then I shifted to applied mathematics and computer science. In 1965-1972 I worked in the Institute for Applied Mathematics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in the position of a Senior Scientific Worker.

I have been involved in the democratic movement since 1968 when I signed several petitions in behalf of prisoners of conscience and on questions of internal policy. Also in 1968 I wrote an essay, "The Inertia of Fear", which was spread in samizdat. Since then, I have never been allowed to go abroad and lost any prospects of promotion. However, in March, 1973, I became a chief of laboratory in the Institute for Automated Systems in Building Industry (IASBI). As I learned afterwards, the administration of the Institute had given me this position because they were not supplied with information on my "political face". The system made a slip.

But it caught up soon. In September, 1973, when a shabby campaign against Academician Andrei Sakharov began, I made a public statement in his defence. Within a fortnight my laboratory was dissolved and I was demoted to the position of a senior scientific worker. At a general meeting of the Institute, my statement, and I along with it, were condemned as a shame for the collective.

Well, I thought, the matter was over, and I would be able to work on. No, in July 1974, I was expelled from the Institute. The way it had been done makes the reason all too evident.

According to the regulations existing for scientific institutes, hiring and firing scientists must be approved by so called "Learned Council" of the Institute, which consists of a number of persons who occupy high places in the administration or have high scientific degrees. The scientist to be approved in the office must present to the Learned Council his character reference, given by the department in which he works, and signed by the head of the party leader and the trade-union leader of the department. The character contains both business and social face parts.

I was to be approved for the office in July. The business part of my character, presented to the Learned Council, indicated that I had more than 60 scientific works and that the programming language REFAL worked out by me and my group had great importance for theory and practice. This part contained only good words on my behalf. But the social face part, which concluded the character reference, stated:

"At the same time, V. F. Turchin, who is tightly connected with Academician Sakharov, made in September 1973 a statement for the bourgeois press justifying Sakharov's conduct. This action of his was unanimously condemned by the general meeting of the Institute". (This "at the same time" is revealing, is it not?)

At the sitting of the Learned Council the chairman (vice-director) began my case by reading this concluding paragraph of the character. My work or qualification was not discussed. Nothing was discussed at all. My fate was predestined by the prior brainwashing of the members of the Learned Council. In a secret ballot they voted 19/4 against my approval in the office. Is not this firing for political reasons?

Since July 1974 I have been jobless. Many times I have tried to find a job. The story has always been the same: there were people on the level of laboratory or department chiefs who were willing to take me, but on the level of the Party committee and the director of the institute, I was invariably refused (evidently, after they had taken advice from certain quarters).

Sergei Kovalev had been a member of the Soviet Amnesty International group, of which I am the chairman. The secretary of our group, physicist Andrei Tverdokhlevov was arrested on 18 April 1975. Simultaneously, with his arrest, home searches were made of me and two more members of our group: Mathematician V. Albrekht and writer M. Rudenko. For more than twelve hours, MVD and KGB people rummaged about in my apartment and compiled a list of confiscated materials. It contains more than 212 items: mostly private letters, typewritten articles,

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etc. During June-September, I was summoned 9 times for interrogations on Tverdokhlebov's and Kovalev's cases.

To depict the conditions under which we live in this country I'll just reproduce several pieces of news I learned when I came home from Vilnius.

1. On December 11th, when I was still in Vilnius, my home telephone was switched off as a punishment for what was called "its use for anti-social purposes." It is a well-established practice. Such dissidents as T. Khodorovich and Prof. Yu Orlov now have their telephones switched off too. Officials can switch off your telephone for several months, and can do that repeatedly. They can also switch it off for good. They do whatever they wish. The same with letters. Usually only congratulation post cards come to me from abroad safely — and yet I do not know whether all of them come. Materials and letters sent registered by the Amnesty Secretariat from London never come. Recently the director of the FAS, Dr. Jeremy J. Stone sent me his book on disarmament with advice of delivery. The postal receipt came back to Dr. Stone, suggesting that I received the book, but I never did! *How about the Helsinki agreement?*

2. It became known that publication of the book "Basic REFAL and Its Implementation", written by me and my pupils, had been stopped because of the political undesirability of my name. The book reflects 10 years of collective work.

I had published one book (Slow Neutrons, 1963) before I became an outspoken dissident, but none of the three books I've written since then has been published. In 1970, I finished writing a book on philosophy of science, "The Phenomenon of Science" for which I had a contract with the publishing house "Sovietskaya Rossiya". By the autumn of 1973 the book was being set in type. But after my statement on Sakharov, its publishing was stopped — because of the shortage of paper, I was told. Evidently, they are still trying to procure paper for my book. My other book, "Programming in the Language REFAL", has been lying without movement in the publishing house "Nauka" for almost four years although I also have a contract for it. The book I mentioned above was written as a planned work in the IASBI and submitted to the Institute just before I was fired. The book was to be published by a humble technical publishing house — that of the Ministry of Building Industry, so I and my co-authors hoped everything would be all right. Oh, hopes.

3. On December 15th, I was told officially that there will be no permission for me to go to America. I applied in July, and repeatedly in October, on the basis of an invitation from Columbia University to come as a visiting scholar and with a private invitation to come as a guest. In a letter sent to Mr. Brezhnev, I indicated that I cannot endlessly stay without a job and therefore I asked permission to live and work abroad retaining my citizenship in order to come back as soon as I could get a job at home. The Council of the Association for Computing Machinery passed a resolution on my behalf, which was sent to Soviet officials. In the resolution the hope was expressed that I would be permitted to accept the invitation by Columbia University. I want to use this occasion to express my gratitude to all persons who showed their concern.

\* \* \* \*

After Kovalev's arrest on 27 December 1974, A. Sakharov, Yu Orlov and myself asked Western scientists to help our colleague. We wrote several letters to scientific organizations and societies, we asked Amnesty International to contact concrete individuals — prominent biologists who knew or could have known Kovalev's works. There was no response deserving to be mentioned and I don't know whether there was any response at all. Nobody called scientists to boycott biological conferences in the USSR. No individual or organization stipulated participation in scientific contacts with the Soviet Union would depend on the release of Dr. Kovalev. No action was made which could have attracted serious public attention and influence Soviet authorities. The world scientific community betrayed Kovalev.\*

You are very proud, my dear colleagues, that you separate science from what you call politics. You do not go in for politics, you say. Neither do we. Dissidents in the Soviet Union do not go in for politics: they struggle for air. What you are separating science from is not politics but mere decency. And in fact, it is not separation, but a reversal, changing of the sign. For whatever you think, you are not neutral in the conflict between totalitarianism and freedom. You actively cooperate with totalitarianism, support it.

When I say totalitarianism, I mean just totalitarianism and not the Soviet regime as such. Neither I, nor my friends, including Kovalev, are fighting against the regime; we are fighting for elementary human rights, and we strive for modification, not destruction of the regime. Totalitarianism is not only a feature of the present Soviet regime, but a more general phenomenon threatening to all mankind. It is against this phenomenon that we fight and for which we seek support from abroad.

Totalitarianism in the Soviet Union becomes now self-reproducing; one generation conditions the next. You help the process of self-reproduction and perpetuation of totalitarianism by providing to it a highly respected international stage — science. People of science are intrinsically enemies of totalitarianism because they need intellectual freedom professionally. The core of the Soviet dissidents consists mainly of scientists. But the state presents a dilemma to the scientist: either to support totalitarianism, to lie and betray comrades, or to challenge the state to some extent and to pay proportionally by professional losses up to the point of losing work and freedom. The Western scientific community helps to conduct this policy by fully accepting totalitarian rules of

\*FAS recognized the significance of the Kovalev case only after its Director's trip to Moscow in early November. Two leading American biological societies refused to cooperate in arranging a defense of Kovalev (see the January Report) and the FAS mailing on behalf of Kovalev to 23,000 biologists could be sent out only after his trial — but it has now been sent urging amnesty or clemency. During the five weeks available, an eminent FAS defense committee was organized which wrote to the Soviet Ambassador, cabled the Lithuanian Procurator General and Kovalev's wife (though she probably never received it). Approximately 20 Senators wrote to the Soviet Ambassador and Senators Kennedy and Cranston cabled the U.S. Embassy in Moscow urging that it send American observers to the trial in light of the fact that Kovalev's difficulties arose in part through his assistance to an American citizen (Kudirka).

The National Academy of Science's Foreign Secretary, George Hammond advised an interested FAS member that to his knowledge NAS had not done anything for Kovalev and, indeed, that in his dealings with Soviet officials, he discussed the general issue of dissidents and not specific individuals.



the game in scientific contacts with the USSR and the satellite countries. One example will suffice: did you ever turn back a Soviet delegation because the scientists you had invited were not included because considered politically unreliable?

Politically reliable people, that is, those who help to strangle the recalcitrant, are allowed by the Soviet authorities to come out on the international scene. You give sanction to this selection. Hands are shaken, words of friendship pronounced. Now imagine a young scientist who must choose his line of behavior. What is your influence on the choice?

By no means have I objections against handshakes with Soviet officials and people selected by them. But why accept totalitarianism so readily? Why not demand, for example, that a small portion of those who participate in scientific exchange — say one to ten — must be the *other side's choice*, and if not, then firmly refuse to cooperate? Scientists hold powerful levers of influence on totalitarian countries. Why do they not use them to save a colleague from imprisonment?

There are separate individuals among Western scientists who do their best trying to help victims of political repression under totalitarianism. We are immensely thankful to them. But they get little or no support from the main body of scientists. Whenever they propose a more or less firm stand, they invariably are in minority (remember the 5th International Congress of Psychiatrists). Evidently, scientists have the same notion of detente as that captain who betrayed Simas Kudirka.

Detente is necessary, I'm completely for detente. But in the absence of strong public pressure for human rights all over the world, detente will automatically lead to proliferation of totalitarianism. The Helsinki Agreement reveals a typical pattern: the West makes real concessions in exchange for imaginary ones from the East. After Helsinki, the situation with human rights in the USSR has only become worse. The terms of imprisonment have lengthened. V. Osipov got eight years, S. Kovalev — seven years; now A. Tverdokhlebov is to be tried. And not a single "politically unreliable" person — not even a Nobel Prize winner — got permission to visit a Western country. The proponents of the Helsinki Agreement argued that it would provide the grounds for exerting pressure on the USSR for exchange of people and ideas. But what is the use of the grounds if there is no desire to exert pressure?

Dear colleagues, you often regard Soviet totalitarianism as something strange and remote, as something that has *no direct bearing on the life in your countries*. It may be your fatal mistake. Those who have lived under totalitarianism warn you constantly what a dreadful potential for destruction this phenomenon has. Alas, you do not listen to them.

Still, I want to warn you once more. If totalitarianism in the Soviet Union is not transformed into democratic socialism, or something of the sort, it will sooner or later come to your countries. When you betray Kovalev and Tverdokhlebov, you betray your children. I pity a world in which even most thinking — professionally thinking — people do not want to understand so simple a truth.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone!

VALENTIN F. TURCHIN  
Moscow, 20-25 December 1975 □

Continued from page 8

acting exactly as I was — mobilizing all efforts and possibilities and relaxing not at all. His companion said: "You are right and my comrade is wrong".)

We had been cautioned not to try to conduct business at the Chou En Lai banquet, but of course I was not about to let up. As the banquet ended, Premier Chou walked with me to the exit. As the above photograph was snapped, adopting the local lingo, I was saying:

"Premier Chou, our scientists want to come to China. But we demand reciprocity. We want your scientists to come to America."

Asked at what university I was stationed, I explained that I worked in Washington, but that we had scientists at all the universities. He replied: "Well, you will introduce us to scientists in many institutions", which I took as another clear confirmation that events would now move rapidly.

Six months later, the first scientific delegation from China was in America. At the airport, witnessing the arrival of this delegation — understanding what it meant to the so-long-isolated scientists of China — I wept, and some of the Chinese did too.

Later, one official said to me, "Well, you were the pioneers". □

### A SAD REFLECTION

At the banquet on June 16, 1972, Premier Chou responded obliquely to earlier FAS urgings at lower levels for arms control exchanges by observing that China was more interested in exchanging experts on such things as medicine (for example, cancer) than on military matters. But, he observed, such persons should be able to combine theory and practice — which, he noted, was always a hard thing to do. He also noted that smoking was said to cause cancer and joked that he smoked incessantly.

After the banquet, I approached the host of our visit, Chou Pei Yuan, and asked if FAS might send a delegation of experts on cancer; I also inquired whether there was any particular kind of cancer of most interest. We received no clear answer on either point.

Nevertheless, back in Washington, FAS organized a superb collection of cancer specialists and wrote Peking proposing to send them. (In the midst of its organization, a member of the FAS delegation who attended the banquet wrote an article speculating that the source of Premier Chou's interest in cancer might be a rumored cancer of Chairman Mao. I telephoned the author of this article, who was then in Japan, and complained bitterly that it might destroy our effort. The Chinese would be reluctant to seem to confirm such rumors by admitting our group. I also wrote the Washington Post a letter, which it printed, objecting that the article's speculation was without any factual foundation.)

But, for some reason, it never occurred to me that Premier Chou — who seemed so energetic — might himself be ill. Now Chinese newspapers reveal that it was in 1972 that Premier Chou first learned that he had cancer. I can only suppose that it was indeed on his mind during our banquet. And I wonder if I could have handled this matter more skillfully. But how? □



Left to right, first row: Premier Chou, Tang Wen-sheng (Nancy Tang), Jeremy J. Stone and B. J. Stone; second row: Now Foreign Minister Ch'iao Kuan-hua, John and Wilma Fairbanks, Jerome Alan Cohen, Vice Rector Peking University Chou P'ei-Yuan and Madame Chou P'ei-Yuan.

**DEALINGS WITH PREMIER CHOU EN LAI AND THE CHINESE**

Our visit to China may have resulted from a translation error and a courtesy. We had written the Ottawa Embassy in late 1971 and received an answer in mid-December saying our request was being considered "positively". Four months later, with no response, we wrote a letter which made it clear that we were waiting expectantly and were puzzled by the delay.

We received a response within eight days (!) saying that invitations to us had crossed with our letter (!). It was evident, even at that time, that the assertion of letters crossing was a form of politeness designed to free us from the apprehension that we had "beaten down the door" to get in.

Later, in Peking, when we met my letter-drafting counterpart, suspicions were confirmed. Asked what the word

"positively" really meant, I explained. It became evident that the Chinese had understood it rather more as "sympathetically". But, having misled us in a way that raised our hopes, the Chinese were not about to deny us the desired visit. Since it was widely rumored, at that time, that Chou En Lai was personally making all decisions as to which Americans were to visit China, we credited him with the courtesy.

I considered the entire, sole, and overriding purpose of the visit to get scientific exchanges started. This intense approach exasperated my traveling companions and surprised one of our most disciplined and Maoist guides who advised me that I should "relax more". (I observed that Chairman Mao, in my situation, would have been

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