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June 29, 1983

Prof. Marshall W. Nirenberg
Lab. of Biochemical Genetics
National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, MD 20014

Dear Prof. Nirenberg:

We are writing to ask for your sponsorship of an international scientific conference, designed to call attention to the worsening situation of colleagues who wish to emigrate from the USSR. Timed to turn to advantage the presence of numerous scientists and a sizable press contingent in Stockholm for events surrounding the Nobel awards, the International Refusenik Seminar-in-Exile on Collective Phenomena will be convened there December 1 and 2, 1983. Chairing an organizing committee of distinguished scientists is Prof. Inga Fischer-Hjalmars, Vice President of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The conference will consist of scientific sessions devoted to the fields of interest of many of the refuseniks.

As you will recall, the Fifth International Conference on Collective Phenomena, scheduled for Moscow in September 1981, was squashed as ten Soviet refusenik would-be participants were threatened with serious reprisals and ten Americans were denied entry visas to the USSR. Since that time the possibility of emigration has become even more remote and the refusenik scientists are experiencing increasing isolation and despair.

Prof. Lerner, whose decade-old biweekly seminar on mathematical biology has been unable to meet since September 1981, discontinued--under threat of criminal prosecution--his meetings with foreign colleagues visiting Moscow. Prof. Naum Meiman, who recently endured a house search and interrogation, has reason to believe he will be tried on contrived charges in retaliation for his human rights activities. And Dr. Viktor Brailovsky, former host of the Moscow Seminar is languishing in internal exile, apprehensive that as the time for his scheduled release approaches, authorities will try him again and extend his sentence. More and more refusenik scientists are being demoted or dismissed from professional employment, called in for interrogations, and issued "final refusals" of emigration. An alarming number of them are facing trials and imprisonment.

Dorothy Hirsch
Executive Director

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Against this backdrop of gross violations of the human rights of our Soviet colleagues, scientists from a number of countries conceived of the Stockholm conference as a concerted demonstration of solidarity. By focusing on the latest developments in their fields, sessions in honor of individual members of the Moscow Seminar will not only dramatize their plight but also will point to the loss sustained by science as a result of their repression.

We look forward to your early response that you will sign on as a sponsor of this event, lending your good name and prestige to its hoped for success.

Sincerely yours,



Mark Kac
Cochairman



Joel Lebowitz
Cochairman



Paul Plotz
Cochairman