

SUBJECT
cc master.

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JL JA
CPC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

24 March 1987

Dear Lynn,

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR. URI ORLOV

The Prime Minister had a further meeting with Mr. Orlov this morning to talk about human rights issues and how she should handle them during her visit to Moscow. Once again Lord Bethell was present.

The Prime Minister said that she would need to pitch what she had to say about human rights in her speeches and television interviews so as to encourage people like Mr. Orlov but not to irritate the Soviet authorities to the point of being counter-productive. Mr. Orlov agreed that this was a delicate balance. He suggested that the Prime Minister should express satisfaction with what had been achieved. She might refer to the need for open frontiers. But so far as possible she should avoid appearing to criticise the state of affairs in the Soviet Union, emphasising instead the advantages enjoyed by the West. People would get the point. She might also explain that arms control and human rights were just two aspects of the same wider problem of security. The Soviet people had been indoctrinated to think that disarmament and peace were one and the same thing. This was a fallacy. Arms control would only be achieved when trust and confidence were established between countries, and that would only happen when the Soviet Union accorded its people basic human rights.

Mr. Orlov said that he understood that the Prime Minister would be meeting Dr. Sakharov. This would be very useful since he had devoted a tremendous amount of thought to human rights problems. He wondered whether she would also meet Mr. Koryagin. To do so would be a great encouragement for those who campaign for human rights in the Soviet Union. Mr. Koryagin was living in Kharkov but could be contacted through Sergey Khodorowich (telephone 114 5612). He would willingly travel to Moscow for the meeting. The Prime Minister said that she would very much like to see Mr. Koryagin but did not know whether there would be time in her programme.

Mr. Orlov handed over a letter to the Prime Minister from a Mr. Slepak who had been trying to emigrate from the Soviet Union for 17 years. I enclose a copy and should be grateful for a reply from the Prime Minister.

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Mr. Orlov said that it was difficult to get a precise picture of who had been released and who remain in prison in the Soviet Union. His opinion was that a large number of religious activists had still not been released, nor had Ukranian members of the Helsinki Monitoring Group. His own assessment was that Gorbachev was working very closely with the KGB in managing the release of certain well known dissidents to obtain maximum impact on public opinion in the West while doing nothing about those whose names were not widely known. It was a very artful exercise. There were also some interesting indications that the Soviet authorities were responsive to outside pressure, however much they might protest to the contrary. He had heard of contacts between the US and Soviet delegations at the CSCE Conference in Vienna in which the Soviet side had asked directly what the US would regard as acceptable concessions on human rights.

Mr. Orlov also commented that more generally he was optimistic about Gorbachev's ability to survive. He was being very careful not to distance himself from the KGB and the Army and repeat the mistakes made by Kruschev.

As he was leaving Mr. Orlov handed over the enclosed papers listing those still in prison in the Soviet Union, drawn up by the United States Helsinki Watch.

*Yours sincerely,
Charles Powell*

(CHARLES POWELL)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

449 New Gate Court C-2
Andalusia, PA 19020

March 19, 1987

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher
10 Downing Street
London, ENGLAND

Dear Prime Minister Thatcher:

I am the son of Maria and Vladimir Slepak - two wonderful, stoic but unfortunate people. People who applied for emigration to Israel from the Soviet Union on April 13, 1970. They are still waiting 17 years later, 17 years older. Alone, clinging to each other for support. They lost their careers, lost their health but not their spirit.

From the day I left Russia in October 1977 I am haunted by the guilt, guilt of leaving my parents behind, betraying them. Soon after my departure, the Soviet authorities arrested my parents and sent them to Siberia for 5 years for displaying the sign in their window asking to be reunited with me in Israel. It is hard to describe in a letter the feelings, the frustration, the pain our family shared through the last 17 years. My mother is a very emotional, sensitive woman, she tries to remain strong - but often during our conversations on the phone she breaks into sobbing, giving up hope. She told me, that her mission in this life has been fulfilled - she raised her children and secured their freedom. But how can I accept such a fate? Being a parent myself, I can understand her sacrifice, but is it necessary to give up your life's desire for freedom.

My grandmother died in Jerusalem, counting nine years, day by day, hoping to see her daughter at least one more time. It never happened. My parents know their grandchildren only by pictures. My father wrote to me, "How much I would give so I could just take my little granddaughter in my arms, put her on my lap and spend all night telling her stories and watching her fall asleep." Is he asking too much?

Is it a privilege or the most basic, fundamental right - the right to determine your own fate, the right to happiness? Their wish to be in their historic homeland, among their own people, to be with friends, children and grandchildren, can not be considered an anti-government plot or anti-Socialistic propaganda. Why all this cruelty, psychological and physical destruction of two intelligent, intellectual people, loved and respected by thousands in Russia and abroad?

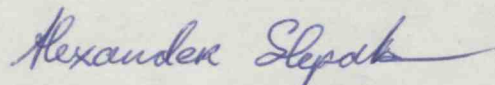
When Andrei Sakharov was approached with the same question he said that, "...In the free world, people do not always recognize who is fighting only for himself, for his own right to leave the Soviet Union, and who is fighting for others as well as for himself. But the KGB know very well who's who. Vladimir Slepak has always been fighting for others, and that may well be the main reason for all his troubles, and for his special treatment by the authorities."

So this is the revenge against my parents, a vendetta of a mighty Super power against a sixty year old couple. What a disgrace, what a shame?

Mrs. Thatcher, on March 27 I am starting a 17 day hunger strike - one day for each year of suffering and devastation since we applied for emigration. I protest the unjust treatment and destruction of our family, I call upon the Soviet government to release my parents. I appeal to you and to the people of your country to give me support, to give me strength, to intervene on my parents behalf.

As I begin my hunger strike, would you please make the release of Maria and Vladimir Slepak your personal request when you meet with Michail Gorbachev in Moscow. Maybe all it would take is a personal intervention by someone of your stature whom the Soviet government respects. Please help us, we are exhausted, we are desperate - tomorrow it might be too late.

With great hope and deepest respect,



Alexander Slepak

VLADIMIR SLEPAK

Vesnina 8-10, Apt. 51
Moscow 121002
USSR

VISA APPLICATION HISTORY

Date of First Application: April 13, 1970
Date of First Refusal: June 1970
Reason for Refusal: "SECRECY" - "STATE INTERESTS"
Most Recent Refusal: February 12, 1987

FAMILY

ALEXANDER SLEPAK (SON)
LEONID SLEPAK (SON)
449 New Gate Court C-2
Andalusia, PA 19020

CASE HISTORY/ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

VLADIMIR and MARIA SLEPAK and their sons, ALEXANDER and LEONID, first applied for exit visas in April 1970 and were refused two months later. VLADIMIR worked as head of a laboratory in the Moscow Scientific Institute of Television Research and MARIA was a Medical Doctor.

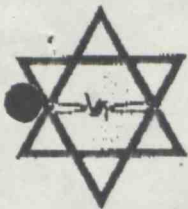
VLADIMIR's activism began in the late 1960's. He was among the first group of Jews to address petitions, letters and appeals to the United Nations. He became known as a leading activist and spokesman for Soviet Jews trying to emigrate to Israel. He led demonstrations and met with foreign journalists, dignitaries, policymakers and tourists. In June 1976, VLADIMIR became a member of the "Public Group to Assist the Fulfillment of the Helsinki Accords in the USSR", along with Anatoly Shcharansky, Yuri Orlov, Elena Bonner and others.

Their efforts did not go unobserved by the Soviet authorities. Since 1970, the SLEPAK's apartment was repeatedly raided and searched. Books, personal letters and photographs were confiscated; the telephone disconnected and listening devices were installed in the walls. The family was often kept under house arrest and all were under constant surveillance. VLADIMIR SLEPAK was vilified in the Soviet press and on the air. On a Moscow television program entitled "Traders of Souls", he and some other activists were described as "soldiers of Zionism inside the Soviet Union", and as part of Western anti-Soviet conspiracy. In March of 1977 he was named in a malicious article published in Izvestia, which accused Jews of espionage and treason.

VLADIMIR was interrogated and called to testify at the Second Leningrad Trial in 1971. He was imprisoned twice that year on charges which were never made known to him. An intensive publicity campaign on behalf of the SLEPAK family was mounted in the West. In 1977, ALEXANDER, the older son, was allowed to join his maternal grandmother in Israel. His brother, LEONID followed in 1979. MARIA'S mother died in Jerusalem in February 1980, having been separated from her oldest daughter for nine years.

In June 1978, MARIA and VLADIMIR SLEPAK were arrested for displaying a banner from their window saying "Let Us Go To Our Son in Israel". VLADIMIR was sentenced to five years of internal exile in Siberia on charges of "malicious hooliganism". Maria was given a three year suspended sentence, but voluntarily shared the intolerable fate with her husband when she learned of his sentence upon her release from prison. The climatic conditions in the remote and barren land were severe. MARIA made the long journey to Moscow periodically in an attempt to retain her residency permit in the capital. VLADIMIR, despite ill health, worked at odd jobs, often outdoors in sub-zero weather. A letter to friends in the West reflected his unbroken spirit. Describing the hardships of their exile, VLADIMIR concluded "...But in spite of everything, we are now the happiest people in the world. Our children and grandchildren are free!" On December 4, 1982 VLADIMIR and MARIA returned to Moscow following completion of his five year sentence in exile.

They remain in Moscow, but for how long?



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Protection of Jewish Prisoners

MEMORANDUM

To: All UCSJ Councils, Affiliates, and International Contacts

From: Pamela B. Cohen *P.B.C.*

Date: March 12, 1987

Subject: Slepak Hunger Strike

The United States Committee to free Vladimir Slepak has called upon the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, B'nai B'rith International, NJCRAC, and Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry to join together in an international effort to free Vladimir and Maria Slepak.

Alexander (Sanya) Slepak, son of Vladimir and Maria Slepak, will undertake a 17-day hunger strike at the U.S. Capitol, signifying the 17 years of his father's status as a refusenik. The purpose is to seek his parents' freedom in their own right and as a symbol to call attention to the plight of all Soviet Jews. Beginning on Friday, March 27, 1987, the strike will continue to Erev Pesach, April 12, 1987.

The beginning of his hunger strike will be marked by a major rally on the steps of the Capitol, joined by a multitude of Senators, Members of Congress, and the leaders of most of the important organizations concerned with Soviet Jewry. This will be timed to coincide with equivalent rallies in major world capitals. It is my hope that those of you in Jerusalem, London (including Luxembourg and Belgium), Paris, and Canada will assume the leadership responsibility for the rallies in your respective areas. More about this in a moment.

During days 2-16, our Councils will have a special and unique opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, this national and international event, which will be dramatically covered by all media. In order for the Committee programs to be successful, all organizations must band together at this time, including our member councils, CRC's and Federations. In each city in which there is a council, I am hoping you will take the lead and responsibility to organize the day's "local" mass rally, enlisting the cooperation of others to the extent possible.

It is the plan to contribute to a unified message, world-wide, by standardizing the format. Thus, a few days before, Sanya will publish an open letter to the New York Times announcing his hunger strike and its purposes, with copies supplied in advance to each of you for

(more)

Slepak Hunger Strike
page two

local distribution. The rally will be held on your respective appointed day at noon in lieu of lunch, in a symbolic fast demonstrating solidarity with the Slepaks and Soviet Jewry. A prominent location will be selected by you; you will assemble the program of distinguished speakers -- e.g., yourself, Mayor, Governor, refuseniks, community and business leaders -- and as large a crowd as possible. You will arrange for media coverage, including network affiliates.

Every participant -- speaker and audience -- should be provided with and wear a black arm-band with yellow letters saying, merely, "Slepak." Publicity will highlight the U.S. Committee to Free Vladimir Slepak (see letterhead attached). (We are looking into the acquisition of such arm bands. If you have ideas, please let our Washington office know.) We are hoping that SSSJ, Hillel and the Brandeis student lobby will generate similar campus rallies during the period.

On the last day, there will be a second Washington rally at which speakers will include presidents of other organizations, Orlov, Wiesel, Scharansky, Congressional and Administration spokespersons, and myself. Elie Wiesel will also send a telegram to Gorbachev concerning the Slepaks each day, and other mass communications may be organized. The major networks will cover all activities throughout the 17 days, thus, your participation will build to a crescendo on the 12th.

The provisional schedule for Noon Council rallies follows:

March	27	All foreign cities and Washington (by the umbrella group)
	28 (Day 2)	Washington, (Shabbat services) (Hopefully the Washington Council will assist with the rallies for days 1 & 17 as well.)
	29	New York City
	30	Minneapolis (L.A. by others)
	31	Houston
April	1	Cleveland and Cincinnati
	2	Miami
	3	San Francisco and Detroit
	4	Day of Rest
	5	Dallas (Philadelphia-by others)
	6	Atlanta
	7	Boston
April	8	Seattle (St. Louis - by others)

(more)



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Slepek Hunger Strike
page three

- | | |
|----|--|
| 9 | Chicago |
| 10 | Denver |
| 11 | Day of Rest |
| 12 | Finale in Washington (by umbrella group) |

Micah H. Naftalin, our new Washington Representative, will coordinate the UCSJ responsibilities. John Rosenberg, the UCSJ Public Affairs Director, will provide the press contact in Washington in the name of the Slepek Committee. There is no time to be lost in beginning to make all necessary arrangements. I urge you, therefore, to do the following:

1. Let Micah know at once whether you will accept responsibility for organizing your respective day's rally. If the date assigned to you is impossible, please provide him with several alternate options so that we can try to have at least one rally each day.

2. Keep him apprised of your preliminary and final plans. Appoint a press contact that can coordinate with John Rosenberg so that we can let the public, National Press and the Congress, know of your activities.

3. I am hoping our Rabbinic Action Committee will help us to get the word out to all Rabbis. Nonetheless, Councils should contact their area Rabbis, urging them to publicize the event, and include in their sermons for Shabbat on March 27/28 - the event; the plight of Soviet Jews in general, and a prayer for the release of the Slepaks in particular. The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews or the Slepek Committee will provide appropriate materials. The synagogues should also be encouraged to hand out the arm bands.

4. Try to keep a scrapbook of your rally programs, press and TV coverage, still photos, speeches, etc..., and send at least one set to the UCSJ office after your rally. This material will be useful to us later in preparing public relations and lobbying publications that highlight your efforts.

Enclosed is the Slepek Committee's early planning materials. To the extent there are differences in detail, the plans in my memo supercede the earlier thoughts. A list of recipients of this memo is also attached.

Although there may be aspects of the overall plan that we might wish to do differently, I'm sure every one of us wants to do our best to help get Vladimir and Maria Slepek out, to dramatize their case as symbolic of all refuseniks and Prisoners-of-Conscience on prime time throughout the world, to collaborate with our colleagues in the other organizations and to demonstrate our ability to mobilize our grass roots support.

This is a unique opportunity for us and I look forward to working closely with Sanya, Norman Leventhal, and Elie Wiesel, as always who is far more involved than his title "Honorary Chairman" implies; with our sister organizations and, especially, with each of you. I am both hopeful and concerned that this effort in mutual cooperation will bring the results that we seek.



Slepek Hunger Strike
page four

There are only 16 days until the hunger strike and our first rally begins!
Not much time, but enough if we all do our best. May we hear from all of you
at your earliest?

Thank you all, and good luck.

Encl. (2)

MHN:pac



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What Shcharansky Means to the World

Others Need Help

By Elie Wiesel

Decent people everywhere are elated, celebrating the release of Anatoly B. Shcharansky — let us call him by his new Hebrew name, Natan — from Soviet prisons. This is understandable: It is their victory as much as his. But in our exultation we forget Vladimir Slepak — and that is both ethically regrettable and politically dangerous.

Shcharansky is a heroic Jew whose false arrest and condemnation mobilized millions of citizens and their leaders. The efforts on his behalf were unprecedented in scope and intensity. They covered scores of countries on five continents. With his wife, Avital, we knocked on every door, moved every stone, invoked every argument. Rallies were held, high officials approached, protests made, petitions signed, vigils encouraged: If ever we felt that we had done everything in our power for an imprisoned man, it was for Shcharansky.

Jews and non-Jews alike, rabbis and priests, politicians and scholars, statesmen and schoolchildren all did their duty. The reward? When President Reagan added his voice to ours

at the summit meeting in Geneva, the Kremlin finally yielded to the accumulated pressure. Shcharansky is free, and the pictures of his arrival in Jerusalem bring tears of joy to our eyes.

But what about Vladimir Slepak? What about Yuri Orlov and Alexander Lerner? Ida Nudel and Iosif Begun, what about them? All those brave "refuseniks" and dissidents — people condemned to live as official pariahs in fear and trembling, condemned to undergo endless ordeals while they wait for signs that are always obscure and for visas that never come — should they not be remembered, too? Many have spent years in jail, others in labor camps, still others are subjected to daily harassment, humiliation and threats: Without our support, without our solidarity, they could not carry on.

Let us remember: What hurts the victim most is not the cruelty of the oppressor but the silence of the bystander. Russian Jews, refuseniks and dissidents, Andrei D. Sakharov as well as Leonid Volvovsky — they all count on us. Do they count for us?

I choose to evoke Vladimir Slepak's case, because, like Shcharansky, he is someone special. He was singled out already in the early 1960's, because he was the first, or one of the first, to teach Hebrew and Jewish history, the first to organize courses for young Jews in search of their identity and culture, the first whose erudition and determination presented a powerful challenge to Soviet dictatorship and its policy of fear and isolation.

Many refuseniks see in him an older brother, a spiritual guide. Whenever fortunate ones, exit visa in hand, left for Israel, he accompanied them to the airport to bid them farewell; he watched them leave, then returned home. That happened again

Slepak, Orlov, Lerner

and again, month after month, year after year. Slepak always remained behind. Why? Who knows. Perhaps because he was the first to proclaim himself free, the Soviet authorities wish him to be the last to go.

Hence this appeal: Now that Shcharansky is out, let it be Slepak's turn. Let us mobilize our energies, our contacts, our professional connections, our academic links, our economic resources. Let us mobilize our passion and our anger on his behalf. And on behalf of all the others who implore us to use our freedom for the sake of theirs. Let us be bold and imaginative. Why not organize a mass rally in Washington? Would it not be right to follow the civil rights march of the 1960's with a human rights march in the 1980's?

What's at stake is not only the freedom and the hope of the refuseniks and other dissidents. Our honor is also at stake. □

Pleased for his friend, a refusenik still waits

By Steve Goldstein
Inquirer Staff Writer

MOSCOW — Hope is a feeling that Vladimir Slepak has had to sustain for a long time.

For 16 years, the well-known Jewish refusenik has been waiting to leave the Soviet Union.

Late last week, his name began to surface as one of the dissidents who might be allowed to emigrate as part of negotiations involving Soviet scientist Gennadi Zakharov and American journalist Nicholas Daniloff, both accused of spying.

Slepak has had reason to hope before, but this time was

"stronger than all the others," he said yesterday. "It was in the newspapers, in the broadcasts."

But when the deal was announced, only one name was mentioned — that of physicist Yuri Orlov, Slepak's old colleague in the Moscow Helsinki Group, which monitored human rights abuses in the Soviet Union before it was crushed by the government.

Orlov, in exile in eastern Siberia, is expected to leave the Soviet Union with his wife, Irina Valltova, by Tuesday.

"I'm very, very glad that he is released," said Slepak, 58, as he



Special to The Inquirer / LAWRENCE RUBIN

Vladimir Slepak visiting in a Moscow apartment last month with fellow refusenik Tatiana Bogomolny (left) and Sister Gloria Coleman, an American nun.

shifted his weight on a rickety park bench near his apartment. "I think he needs the freedom more than I do, after all, because he's longer in prison and has had very bad treatment there."

"He's a very high rank of scientist," he went on, "and for many years out of the scientific life. Now, he can do something in his field. I was just an engineer, and I

(See SLEPAK on 20-A)

SLEPAK, from 1-A

lost something less than he lost."

His tone was matter-of-fact, with not the slightest hint of bitterness. He grinned broadly through his fuzzy gray beard when he was told that another old friend, Anatoly Shcharansky, said yesterday from the Hague, Netherlands, that he wished Slepak had been freed with Orlov. Shcharansky, perhaps the best-known Soviet refusenik, was allowed to emigrate to Israel last spring.

"It's very good," said Slepak. "I have very good feelings, because I know Anatoly is fighting for me. It's very hopeful."

He first applied to emigrate in 1970, one year after he lost his job as head of a laboratory at a television research institute.

In 1978, he and his wife, Mariya, went out on the balcony of their Gorky Street apartment in Moscow with a banner that read, "Let us out to our son in Israel."

They were both arrested for "malicious hooliganism." Mariya received a suspended sentence, but Vladimir was exiled for five years to the small village of Tsokto-Changil in eastern Siberia.

Exile was bad, he said, what with sandstorms and 100-degree temperatures in the summer, and 45 below in the winter, but the trip there was "the worst time of my life."

"It took a month, this *etap*," he said, using a slang word for prisoner transport. He and others rode in a railway car, 35 people in a compartment meant for four, with wire mesh instead of a door so the guards could watch them.

"Two times a day we had water, one cup shared by everyone," he said. "Two prisoners had tuberculosis, but the cup was shared by all. Two times a day they took you to the toilet."

It was a relief, finally, to reach the place of exile.

Slepak's exile ended Dec. 4, 1982, and again he was hopeful that he would be allowed to leave the country. It took 11 months for the authorities to decide that he could officially live in Moscow, and both he and Mariya thought that the uncertainty meant they might be permitted to leave. They shared their hope with their sons, who had already emigrated — Alexander, a Temple University student, and Leonid, who had left Israel for New York.

But nothing happened. Slepak was given a menial job in a hospital for which he is paid about \$135 per month. He talks to foreign correspondents and reads the books they give him. He is watched all the time by agents of the KGB, he said.

Hope of release began again last Friday. Olga, Leonid's ex-wife, called

from New York. "I hope we will see you soon," she said. "I saw Alex Goldfarb, and he said he has good news for himself and for you."

The name of Goldfarb's father, David, had appeared in American newspapers, along with those of Orlov and Slepak, as part of a deal that would involve the release of Daniloff in Moscow and Zakharov in New York.

On Saturday, Slepak was told by a reporter that he might be released. That evening, Slepak was visited by two friends from Philadelphia, who showed him an American newspaper that mentioned the alleged deal.

Mariya Slepak got very upset. "What are they doing?" she said. "They will be breaking this deal."

Both Vladimir and Mariya Slepaks were aware of how sensitive Soviet authorities are to publicity about refuseniks. They said they had heard a radio report that a deal to free Shcharansky fell through two years ago after the negotiations became public.

In the United States, Alexander and Leonid Slepak were hearing the same rumors. They telephoned their parents from New York.

"Maybe something will happen, maybe something won't," they told them. "But in any case, be hopeful." Nothing happened.

Slepak looked down at his hands, chapped in yesterday's cold, and said that he had no choice but to forget this disappointment.

"It's not that I'm so brave or that I have some character," he said. "Maybe I have strong nerves, I can't say. If you want to survive, you have no choice."

"Being in my position, [it is best] not to be very happy when I hear that very soon I may be released, and not to be very sad when it doesn't happen."

"Otherwise, it's very easy to go to the mental hospital."

Slepak asked a few questions about the scheduled meeting between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev in Iceland on Oct. 11 and 12. Then, he stood, smiled and walked away. There was still reason to hope.

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WASHINGTON DC 20036

ON MARCH 27, 1987, ALEXANDER SLEPAK, THE SON OF LONG TERM REFUSENIKS VLADIMIR AND MARIA SLEPAK, OF MOSCOW, WILL START A 17 DAY HUNGER STRIKE IN WASHINGTON TO SYMBOLICALLY MARK THE 17 YEARS SINCE HIS PARENTS FIRST APPLIED FOR AN EXIT VISA. THEIR SONS HUNGER STRIKE WILL BE MARKED BY MEETINGS AND/OR RALLIES IN WASHINGTON, NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, MINNEAPOLIS, HOUSTON, CLEVELAND, CINCINNATI, MIAMI, SAN FRANCISCO, DETROIT, PHILADELPHIA, DALLAS, ATLANTA, BOSTON, SAINT LOUIS, SEATTLE, CHICAGO AND DENVER, AS WELL AS IN CANADA AND OTHER MAJOR CITIES AROUND THE WORLD.

REASON AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO GREAT COUNTRIES IS STARTING TO PREVAIL. VLADIMIR SLEPAK IS 60 YEARS OLD, HAS NOT HAD A RESPONSIBLE JOB FOR 17 YEARS AND SHOULD NOT IN ANY WAY BE CONSIDERED A STATE SECURITY RISK. THEIR ONLY DESIRE IS TO LIVE OUT THE REMAINDER OF THEIR LIVES IN ISRAEL AND TO SEE THEIR CHILDREN AND FIVE GRANDCHILDREN. WON'T YOU PLEASE RECONSIDER THEIR CASE? YOU HAVE RECENTLY SIGNED A DECREE PERMITTING FIRST DEGREE RELATIVES TO BE REUNITED. YOU HAVE IT WITHIN YOUR POWER TO LET THEM LEAVE BEFORE THEIR SON'S HUNGER STRIKE. PLEASE AUTHORIZE THE RELEASE OF VLADIMIR AND MARIA SLEPAK NOW. THEY ARE MY CLOSE FRIENDS. IF YOU SO WISH, I AM READY TO COME IMMEDIATELY TO PLEAD THEIR CASE PERSONALLY BEFORE YOU. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.

ELIE WIESEL
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15:36 EST

MGMCOMP