



In Defense of
**Mustafa
Dzhemilev**

Reza Baraheni
Pavel Litvinov
Ralph Schoenman
Martin Sostre

Notes about the speakers:

Pavel Litvinov was a leading figure in the human rights movement that emerged in the Soviet Union in the 1960s. He worked closely with such noted critics of the Stalinist regime as Andrei Sakharov, Pyotr Grigorenko, and the late Alexei Kosterin. A personal friend of Dzhemilev, Litvinov has defended the cause of the Crimean Tatars for many years.

In August 1968 Litvinov was arrested for demonstrating in Red Square against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. For this "crime" he was imprisoned until November 1972. When he refused to cease his activities in support of democratic rights, Litvinov was detained by the KGB on December 5, 1973, and told to choose between exile and imprisonment in a labor camp. In April 1974, Litvinov arrived in the United States where he is currently a member of the International Advisory Committee of the International League for Human Rights and on the Editorial Board of Khronika Press which makes the Russian language samizdat available in printed form.

Reza Baraheni is Iran's most prominent modern poet and literary critic. Because of his writings critical of the political, national, and cultural repression of the government of the Shah of Iran, Reza was arrested and spent 102 days in the Shah's prisons until he was freed in December 1973 as a result of an international defense campaign.

Reza is currently active in the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran, a New York based organization which defends and publicizes the cases of the thousands of political prisoners in Iran today.

Reza's prison poems are available in the book *God's Shadow*, published by Indiana University Press.

Ralph Schoenman was the executive director of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation from 1963 to 1968, and the secretary general of the International War Crimes Tribunal which played a major role in helping to expose the genocidal nature of the American war in Vietnam.

He is the author of *Death and Pillage in the Congo: A Study of the Western Role* and *Bertrand Russell: Philosopher of the Century*, and is currently director of the American Foundation for Social Justice.

Martin Sostre became politically active while serving a twelve-year prison sentence during the 1950s. His fight for the religious rights of Muslim prisoners and his challenge of the legality of all-white parole boards led prison officials to place him in solitary confinement for five years.

After his release, he opened a bookstore in Buffalo, New York, that carried literature on the Black liberation struggle. When Buffalo's Black community exploded in 1967, Sostre became the target of police reprisals. He was arrested in July 1967 on frame-up charges of selling \$15 worth of heroin and sentenced to a term of thirty to forty-one years in prison. The chief prosecution witness subsequently recanted his testimony, but Sostre's sentence was upheld. While in prison, Sostre resumed his work on behalf of prisoners' rights, for which he was punished by another three years of solitary confinement.

Sostre was adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. Andrei Sakharov issued a call for his release. Under such pressure, Gov. Hugh Carey ordered Sostre's release in 1976, after nearly nine years' imprisonment.

INTRODUCTION

On April 15, 1976, Mustafa Dzhemilev was sentenced in Omsk, Siberia to a term of two and one half years in a labor camp on charges of "anti-Soviet activity." This is the fourth term of imprisonment Mustafa Dzhemilev has received because of his activities in defense of the right of his people, the Crimean Tatars, to return to their homeland in Crimea.

In reality, Mustafa is one of numerous Crimean Tatars who have been victimized by the present government in the Soviet Union because, acting as elected representatives of the Crimean Tatar people, they have worked—through means completely legal according to the Soviet Constitution—to obtain the national and human rights guaranteed to them as Soviet citizens but denied them in fact.

The goals of the Crimean Tatar people have been well expressed in tens of thousands of statements, letters and petitions from them to the Soviet government and Communist party leaders. In 1971 these appeals made up 163 volumes and taken together had more than three million signatures. The following sums up the essence of their struggle, quoted from "An Appeal of the Crimean Tatar People to the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to the Soviet Press, and to All Communists," dated March 1971:

"Our situation as a nation is intolerable. But we are not asking for anything exceptional. We believe that the Party will resolve this question. It is this profound faith in the party of Lenin that compels us to appeal to the Twenty-Fourth Party Congress, to this great forum of the communists of our country, whose faithful sons we are. . .

"October 18, 1921 will remain forever in the memories of the Crimean Tatar people. On that unforgettable day, the leader of the Revolution, the great Lenin, signed a Decree establishing the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. . .

"A terrible national tragedy befell the Crimean Tatar people the night of May 17-18, 1944. While the able-bodied Crimean Tatar people were fighting in the front lines of the Great Fatherland War, their families at the rear—old men and women, women with

children, partisan fighters, members of the government of the Crimean Autonomous Republic, deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR—all without exception were thrown out of their homes, loaded into special trains and deported to far-off regions of the country. To cover up the essence of this barbaric act of deporting the Crimean Tatars from their homeland, the enemies of Lenin's policy on nationalities and friendship of peoples, maliciously raised a totally unfounded charge of 'betrayal of the Fatherland' against our people."

Two hundred thousand Crimean Tatars were deported from Crimea May 17-18, 1944 by Stalin to settlements in Central Asia. Nearly half the population perished during the first years of exile. In 1946, Stalin abolished the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

Following Stalin's death, the deportation of the Crimean Tatars, like the deportation of numerous other small peoples during that time, was acknowledged by the Soviet rulers to have been one of Stalin's crimes. In September 1967, the Soviet government finally acknowledged that the charge of "treason", which Stalin had fabricated to justify his criminal act against the Crimean Tatars, was false.

Yet the Crimean Tatars are not allowed to return to Crimea.

In their hundreds of petitions and appeals, the Crimean Tatars have repeatedly expressed their demands, and they were included at the close of the appeal quoted above:

"Again today, our people turn their eyes toward the great Leninist party, to its Twenty-Fourth Congress. . . Appealing to the great forum of communists, we ask that you:

1. Make a decision in favor of the organized return of Crimean Tatars to their native region—Crimea, having established conditions for our successful development as a people and as a nation.

2. Put into effect once again the Decree of Lenin of October 18, 1921 on establishment of the Crimean Autonomous Republic.

3. Restore to membership in the Party all those expelled from it for taking part in our national movement.

4. Free and fully pardon all our representatives convicted for taking part in our national movement.

5. Make those who have falsified the history of the Crimean Tatar people accountable for their actions."

The response of the government in the Soviet Union to these demands has been persecution of the leaders and continued harassment of Crimean Tatars whether they remain in Central Asia or try to return on their own to reside in Crimea.

And the leaders of the Crimean Tatars, like Mustafa Dzhemilev, who champion these demands of their people, are arrested and imprisoned on charges of "anti-Soviet activity."

Following Mustafa's sentencing in April, he appealed the court's verdict. The Russian-language underground journal *A Chronicle of Current Events*, No. 41 reports that on May 25, the Supreme Court upheld the verdict and on June 25, Mustafa was transferred from Omsk prison where he was being held to a labor camp in the Khabarovsk Region in the far eastern part of the USSR.

This pamphlet contains speeches of support for Mustafa Dzhemilev and the Crimean Tatar people made by four human rights activists at a public meeting sponsored by the Mustafa Dzhemilev Defense Committee in New York City, June 24, 1976.

Three of the speeches are by persons who have themselves been political prisoners: Reza Baraheni in Iran, Pavel Litvinov in the Soviet Union, and Martin Sostre in the United States. Reza Baraheni's speech was originally printed in *Intercontinental Press*, August 2, 1976. Ralph Schoenman's was printed in *Intercontinental Press*, August 30, 1976; and Pavel Litvinov's and Martin Sostre's speeches were printed in the September 1976 issue of the *International Socialist Review*. The speeches are preceded by an article describing this June 24 meeting by Marilyn Vogt which appeared in *Intercontinental Press*, June 30, 1976.

We are also reprinting an appeal in defense of Dzhemilev signed by Baraheni, Litvinov and Sostre that appeared in *The New York Review of Books*, July 15, 1976.

In addition, we are pleased to include a poem "A DOUBLE MASK: Our Mission in Arras" written and dedicated by Reza Baraheni to Mustafa Dzhemilev.

The Mustafa Dzhemilev Defense Committee organized the June 24 meeting and is publishing these materials as part of its continuing effort to publicize the facts about Dzhemilev's case and the national and political repression of the Crimean Tatar people whom Dzhemilev is imprisoned for defending.

We are convinced that once the facts on these matters are known, Dzhemilev and the Crimean Tatars will receive the support they need and deserve from those who defend democratic rights, the rights of oppressed nationalities, and freedom for political prisoners around the world. □



Pavel Litvinov speaking at June 24 meeting.

New York Meeting Demands Release of Dzhemilev

by Marilyn Vogt

A meeting was held in New York June 24 to publicize the case of imprisoned Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev. Dzhemilev was sentenced in April in Omsk, Siberia, to his fourth term of imprisonment on a charge of "anti-Soviet activity."

His alleged crime is to have been active in the struggle of the Tatars to return to their homeland in the Crimea. In 1944, they were deported en masse by Stalin, who accused the entire Tatar population of treason.

The more than 100 persons who attended the meeting heard an impressive array of speakers, including exiled Soviet dissident Pavel Litvinov, former American political prisoner Martin Sostre, and Iranian poet and dissident Reza Baraheni.

Litvinov provided a firsthand account of the development of the Crimean Tatar struggle and urged all who oppose the persecution of oppressed nationalities to come to the defense of Dzhemilev.

Sostre, a Black Puerto Rican who was sentenced in 1968 to a term of forty-one years on phony drug charges, described his own case. He told how international protests, including an appeal from Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov, helped secure his freedom.

"As a former political prisoner," he said, "I consider Mustafa as well as other political prisoners throughout the world my brothers, because I can really identify with political frame-up and repression of persons of conscience who fought for human rights and dignity."

"But the very fact that I am here now," Sostre continued, "is proof positive that even the most repressive state can be forced to disgorge its political prisoners. . . . My case is a classic case of what can be done to free a political prisoner."

Baraheni, who was imprisoned and tortured for 102 days by the shah of Iran, was also freed by an international defense campaign. He spoke of the special identity he, as a Turk, felt with Dzhemilev, who is also a Turk.

Although the ten million Turks in Iran have not been deported, Baraheni said, they are deprived of their language, culture, and history by the shah just as the Crimean Tatars are by the Stalinist regime. He said there was little difference between the struggle of the Tatars in the Soviet Union and that of the Palestinians in the Middle East, or the Blacks in South Africa, or the Kurds in Iraq.

John Breheny, a member of Irish Northern Aid, which raises funds to alleviate the suffering of victims of British oppression in Northern Ireland, pointed to the similarities between the struggle of the Catholics in Northern Ireland and the fight of the Crimean Tatars.

Pat Wright, an activist in the struggle for Black equal rights and a Socialist Workers party candidate for Congress, called attention to victories that have been won in defense cases in the United States and the Soviet Union. "The Soviet rulers were forced to free Leonid Plyushch," she said. "And we will force

them to free Mustafa Dzhemilev."

Ralph Schoenman, who helped organize the Bertand Russell War Crimes Tribunal, scored the repression of the Crimean Tatars. Their fate, he said, has been "one of deportation in cattle trucks, of half a nation being liquidated, of reservations, convoys, prison, and genocide. . . . In effect, the regime has sought to take from the Tatars and Mustafa Dzhemilev a language, a culture, a historical tradition, a very identity. . . ."

"Who is doing this? How can the leadership of the Soviet Union call itself socialist when it performs these acts? For every revolutionary, for every socialist, for every Marxist, the question is posed: What is the relationship between socialism and liberty?"

Melanie Czajkowskyi, a Ukrainian activist, spoke on behalf of the Committee for the Defense of Soviet Political Prisoners. She linked the struggle of Dzhemilev and the Crimean Tatars to the cause of the more than 100 different nationalities in the Soviet Union, including the Ukrainians, who suffer under the Great Russian chauvinism of the Stalinist regime.

The variety of the different nationalities of the speakers at the meeting, she said, showed the awakening and growing international solidarity of oppressed nationalities around the world. Only by continuing to extend this solidarity, she said, can the goals Mustafa Dzhemilev is fighting for be realized.

Rose Styron, a poet and member of the American Board of Amnesty International, read a statement in solidarity with Dzhemilev from exiled Uruguayan Senator Wilson Ferreira Aldunate. Ferreira Aldunate, who narrowly escaped death at the hands of the Argentine and Uruguayan regimes, secured asylum in the United States following an international defense campaign in his behalf.

Styron also read excerpts from a statement by Crimean Tatar women

describing the persecution they have been subjected to since their forced deportation.

Eqbal Ahmad, a fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington and a prominent civil libertarian from Pakistan, said: "I did have some trepidations" about appearing at this meeting. "But I have a great deal of relief and sense of delight to be here . . . and surprise, because I had not seen yet a meeting concerned with repression in Russia" that was organized "for reasons that concerned humanity rather than mere anticommunism; that concerned liberty rather than sheer anti-Sovietism."

Mijbeyin Altan, a Crimean Tatar active in Amnesty International, scored the fact that Mustafa Dzhemilev "has spent the most productive years of his young life in Soviet prisons for defending human rights and the rights of his own people."

He pointed to the hypocrisy of the Soviet government "posing as a friend of the Muslim people" internationally, while "oppressing the Muslim people within its own boundaries." He continued:

"We, the Crimean Tatars of the United States, demand the Soviet government free Mustafa Dzhemilev and all the political prisoners in the Soviet Union immediately . . . reestablish the Crimean Tatar Autonomous Republic [established by the Bolsheviks in 1921 but abolished by Stalin in 1946] . . . and have an organized return of all the Crimean Tatar people to their ancestral homeland."

A victory for the Crimean Tatar people, he said, "will help all the oppressed people against their oppressors."

As part of the effort to help secure the victory of this struggle, participants at the meeting sent a telegram of protest to the Kremlin, demanding freedom for Mustafa Dzhemilev and recognition of the right of the Tatars to return to the Crimea. □

Mustafa Dzhemilev and the Struggle for Human Rights

by Pavel Litvinov

The year 1944, the 18th of May, Crimea. Crimean Tatars lived in the steppe of the Crimea in small villages, where they worked as collective farmers and peasants.

On that day, suddenly Soviet soldiers came to every house, opened the doors, and said to the people—who were old people, children, and women, because all men were in the Red Army fighting against Hitler—"You have twenty minutes to gather everything you have, whatever you can carry. . . ."

Then all of these people—children, women, and old people—were put into cattle cars and this train, traveling almost two months, brought them to Central Asia and Siberia. During this time of transportation—almost without food, sometimes without water—and during the first several months of exile, in what was really a desert, deprived of any possibility to make their living, 46 percent of the population of the Crimean Tatars perished.

Crimean Tatars were not alone in this fate. There were other nationalities—Kalmucks, Greeks, Chechens, Bulgars, earlier it was Germans. Fourteen nationalities had the same fate; they were all accused of being traitors, of betraying their homeland. Everybody—children and even unborn children.

Everyone was sent into exile, and many perished during the forced journey. It was one of the many crimes of Stalin's regime.

What does it mean that they were accused of treason? What does it mean that they were called a "nationality of traitors"?

During the Second World War, when most people of the Soviet Union fought

against Hitler, there were some among the many peoples of the Soviet multinational state who for one reason or another cooperated with the German army. I'm sure all of you have heard about the one-million-man Vlasov army, and about the various Ukrainian movements. It is a very complicated question why these people did what they did. I don't want to justify it, but I cannot condemn them. Many of them suffered terribly because of the forceful collectivization, because of the 1930s and so on. But that is not the point. Of course there were such people among all the nationalities and among the Crimean Tatars. But this does not justify the condemnation and genocide of the whole people, the whole nationality.

Anyway, among these so-called traitors was a baby named Mustafa Dzhemilev. He was born six months before this forceful deportation. And he grew up with the knowledge that the people in Central Asia among whom he lived considered him a representative of a traitor nation.

In 1956, when he was twelve years old, he started to participate in a small organization of children who wanted to know who they were, what their nationality was, and why this had happened to them. When he was sixteen, Mustafa, together with other young people, founded the Youth League of Crimean Tatars. After this, the persecution started.

He was arrested several times. He lost his job. He was framed for draft evasion.

I will not enumerate all the ways he was persecuted, but he was one of the first, and one of the most active participants in the Crimean Tatars'

national human rights movement, the movement to return to Crimea, to return to their homeland.

Even after 1956, after the 20th Congress of the Communist party, when most but not all of the forcibly exiled peoples were allowed to return to their homelands, the Crimean Tatars were still not allowed to do so. And in the beginning of the 1960s their movement, a peaceful movement, began.

I want to stress that their movement was always peaceful; they never used any violence or had the idea of violence. They wanted to attract attention to their cause in whatever way they could. They wrote letters, they organized demonstrations.

“Dzhemilev sympathized not only with the Crimean Tatar cause, but with the whole problem of human rights, with the rights of nationalities like the Ukrainians and many others. . .”

Nobody really knew about the Crimean Tatars' movement in the 1960s when it began. I heard that there were some people who were collaborators with Hitler because several books slandering them were published in the Soviet Union.

But really I didn't know and I didn't care, and the same was true with most people in the Soviet Union.

In 1967 I was one of the first activists of the human rights movement, which started after the arrests of several writers—of Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuly Daniel, Alexander Ginzburg, Yury Galanskov, and many, many others. I got in touch with two remarkable people, one of whom died in 1968. He was the late writer Alexei Kosterin, an Old Bolshevik who spent eighteen years in Stalin's labor camps and then was rehabilitated. He became a member of

the Writers Union, and in 1966 he, as well as all other members of the Writers Union, received a letter from Crimean Tatars, about whom he really knew nothing. But he was a man of great conscience and he decided to learn what had happened. He was the first, and then his friend Major General Pyotr Grigorenko joined him. They began writing letters in defense of the Crimean Tatars.

In 1967-68 I was an assistant professor of physics at the Moscow Chemical Institute when I started my activity and became a friend of Grigorenko and Kosterin. I first met representatives of the Crimean Tatars in Moscow. Among them was Mustafa Dzhemilev.

I remember my first impression: He looked like a boy, very small and he had a smooth boyish face. An eastern kind of face, very handsome and very small. I liked him from the start. I felt that this man was spiritually akin to me. We met several times in 1968. At that time the Crimean Tatars had many problems with persecution by the KGB [Soviet secret police] and the Soviet authorities.

Dzhemilev was one of the Crimean Tatars who sympathized not only with the cause of the Crimean Tatars but with the whole problem of human rights, with the rights of minority groups, of nationalities like the Ukrainians, and many others.

Dzhemilev was different from many others in this period who felt it would be better to be absolutely loyal to the Soviet regime—the attitude of “We'll support the Soviet regime in all cases, and we'll politely ask the Soviet authorities to allow us to return.” They thought this strategy would help. But it didn't help, and now fewer and fewer Crimean Tatars think this way.

They also didn't want their cause to be publicized abroad. They didn't want human rights activists like myself, Grigorenko, or others to speak about Crimean Tatars because they thought that it would be harmful.

They were wrong, but Mustafa Dzhemilev was one of the first who understood the whole problem of human rights.

He couldn't get a real higher education but he educated himself. He was a very strong Moslem believer. Once he told me about the various directions of Moslem development and history. I was struck by how well educated he was, how well he knew the whole subject.

I didn't hear much at that time, for example, about the Palestinian cause. He was the first who told me about the real problem. I can say that I was very skeptical in that period as to what the whole story was in the Middle East, but he really knew.

In 1968 I participated in a demonstration against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and was arrested. The Crimean Tatar movement continued and Mustafa Dzhemilev, together with a friend of mine, the poet and Jew Ilya Gabai, who later died, were both arrested and were sentenced to three years of labor camp for so-called anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.

Dzhemilev, I should add, is an advocate of nonviolent protest against injustice, and the Crimean Tatars have always used peaceful methods in their struggle. This is something that the human rights movement and the Crimean Tatars have in common.

In 1972 I returned to Moscow and at this time Mustafa's sentence finished but he lived in Uzbekistan in Central Asia and I didn't meet him. The last time I met him was several weeks before my departure from Russia. He came from Tashkent and one of the purposes was to say farewell to me. We spent the night talking about the whole problem of the human rights struggle.

Before this period [in 1969], he had become one of the participants in the Initiative Group in Defense of Human Rights. It was one of the reasons for his arrest in 1969.

Mustafa felt keenly all problems of human rights. When I met him after

this break of almost five years at the end of 1973 or the beginning of 1974, he was much older. He had lost a lot of his hair in the labor camp and he was not such a young man any more. He didn't look like a boy as he did at our first meeting. But he was absolutely the same; he didn't become bitter from the persecution. And very soon after I came to this country, I learned about his new arrest, his hunger strike, his diseases that were discovered after his hunger strike, and the new persecutions and new frame-up against him.

I want to say that Mustafa Dzhemilev is my personal friend and he is a symbol of a pure and remarkable movement, the Crimean Tatar movement. It is the only movement in the Soviet Union in which everyone—from children to old women and men—are all participants. It is the only movement that is so united.

This movement is very important, not only as a cause against genocide, a cause against persecution of innocent people, and an innocent nationality, but as a cause which is important in the turn of the whole Soviet society toward something human that I hope can happen in the future. And the contribution of the Crimean Tatars in this necessary turn of Soviet society to a more human society is and will be very great.

And really, all the different nationalities in the Soviet Union—Russians, Jews, Ukrainians, Crimean Tatars—the best people from all these nationalities now work together for the cause of human rights in the Soviet Union, in the country that calls itself socialist.

I am sure that support from people who suffered in Ireland, from those who want to help the people who suffer in Chile, and so on—such international support of the human rights of suppressed people and nationalities, is one of the key factors.

We should be all together in support of the human rights of those who suffer under repressive regimes throughout the world. □

Free Mustafa Dzhemilev and All Other Political Prisoners!

by Reza Baraheni

In a letter written and signed on August 20, 1969, by Mustafa Dzhemilev, Leonid Plyushch, and many other Soviet dissidents, the prominent signatories touched on a prominent issue, which deals with our international plight today. They said, "We are firmly convinced that a people which oppresses other peoples cannot be free or happy."

This is something with which we can hardly disagree. The genocide of American Indians and the enslaving, lynching, and assassination of the American Blacks by the whites, are of the same caliber as the mass slaughter of the Vietnamese people by the American army. The same system that administered the coup in 1953 in Iran, the coup in Guatemala, the Bay of Pigs, the coup in Chile, and in fact created oppression in all corners of the Third World, also created Watergate.

Those who oppress others cannot be free or happy among themselves.

But the above quotation does not come from a letter written on the occasion of American involvement abroad. The letter was written to protest the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the forces of the Warsaw Pact. The invasion was an outright violation of all the principles on which the Bolshevik revolution was founded.

The protest to the invasion came not from a host of demoralized and depoliticized "nuts"; it came from those who are Marxists, and who adhere to the Leninist line of self-determination of nationalities, and those who also abhor capitalist exploitation of nationality movements.



Reza Baraheni

The leaders of the Soviet Union, trained on Stalinist indoctrination, turned deaf ears to the protest and the Czechoslovak movement. The democratic movement was crushed. But this wasn't the only democratic movement that has been crushed by Stalinism within the Soviet satellites or within the Soviet Union. Of these, the crushing of the movement of the Crimean Tatars is the most abhorrent example.

To refresh our memories, let me say that in the heroic war of the Soviet peoples against fascism and Nazism, twenty million people gave their lives to defend the Soviet territories and the freedom of their peoples; 2.5 percent of the Soviet Union's population for each year of the war fell in the battle. This is

a great number, and certainly it demonstrates the extent to which Hitler would go in killing people, and the extent to which the peoples of the Soviet Union would go in defending their own freedom and their own revolution.

But from 1944 to 1945, about 50 percent of all the Crimean Tatars were killed by the regime that was fighting fascism. What Hitler did to the Jews, Stalin did to the Crimean Tatars.

“ . . . there is very little difference in my mind between the Palestinian movement, the movement of the Black majority in South Africa . . . on the one side and the Crimean Tatar movement on the other.”

In the spring of 1969, Pyotr Grigorenko wrote, “Genocide was one of the terrible products of the two accursed Führers of the twentieth century. But the frenzied Adolf set at once upon nations numbering hundreds of millions, while the ‘Marxist’ Stalin preferred to ‘get a little training’ on the small nations. Among these nations fate included the Crimean Tatars.”

Half of the whole Tatar nation was murdered. The rest were deported and since then their language and culture, in fact, all their national characteristics, have been demolished. But fortunately the spirit, the leaders, and the yearning to go back to Crimea, their place of birth and origin, are still there.

Mustafa Dzhemilev represents this movement. The plight of the Crimean Tatars is as old as he is, and his name is so much linked with the movement that a threat on his life is a threat on the life of the whole movement. At the same time, if this nationality movement is crushed, hope for the self-

determination of other nationality movements will become meager.

For instance, there is very little difference in my mind between the Palestinian movement, the movement of the Black majority in South Africa—that is to say, Pretoria and Soweto—the Kurdish movement, on one side, and the Crimean Tatar movement on the other. The Soviet Union will look sincere in the eyes of the world in its defense of the Palestinians only when the democratic steps in similar cases inside the USSR are taken.

I would like to say that we are living in a world which dictates that progressive nationality movements be put on the agenda of all revolutionary movements. I believe that if the Crimean Tatars are allowed to go back to Crimea and have their national self-determination and cultural and linguistic identity restored, and if they live unharassed by the bigger nationalities, then the Soviet Union will have actually reverted to the spirit of the Bolshevik revolution, and to the spirit of revolutionary internationalism. Otherwise, Stalin’s specter is still hanging over the Soviet Union, and—certainly—over the whole world.

I identify with Mustafa in more than one way. His mother tongue and mine are the same. We speak two dialects of the same Altaic-Uralic language called Turkish, but we are forbidden to use it. I cannot use it because of the shah [of Iran]; he could not and cannot use it because of Stalin and Stalinism.

Although not deported—certainly it would be difficult to deport ten million Turks from Iran—the national rights of the Turks in Iran are violated in the same manner as the rights of the Tatars in the Soviet Union. The Turks in Iran do not have an autonomous government of their own; the Tatars don’t have one either.

Stalin slaughtered and deported the Tatars on the pretext that they were collaborating with the Germans. Stran-

gely enough, the shah imagines that if the Turks in Iran were given self-determination they would immediately join the Soviet Union. As if those like the Tatars, who have joined, have self-determination. The problem is, those who have the power think that those who don't have it are all traitors. So the most powerful are killing the least powerful in the world. This is how we maintain this world of ours, the world of oppressors and the world of the oppressed.

I also identify with Dzhemilev because we both belong to a common heritage—the Islamic heritage. By that I don't mean religion only, but also some sort of cultural and traditional heritage which certainly facilitates communication among the Muslims. In other words, where there would be gaps between myself and a Christian American, there would be bridges between me and Mustafa. These bridges are not only religious, but also cultural, and certainly a more liberated form of identity than religion per se.

And last, but not least, I identify with him in his battle for the rights of his oppressed nationality. He is a great

defender of the three topics of our concern in this meeting—namely, the rights of political prisoners, democratic rights, and the rights of oppressed nationalities. I believe that these should be the immediate concerns of all decent revolutionary movements in the world. It would be criminal to play nationality movements into the hands of either capitalist imperialism, or Stalinist bureaucracy, or a combination of both, as we have seen for example in the case of the Kurdish movement in Iraq.

The Soviet Union must be asked to restore the rights of all oppressed nationalities within its borders, including the Ukrainians, the Jews, and certainly the Tatars. All lovers of freedom should battle for this restoration, because this is one of the most important ways through which the Soviet regime will be able to purge itself of its Stalinism.

To Dzhemilev, I can only say, *yashasin*, which simply, in our common Turkish, means go on living.

Let us fight to free Dzhemilev and to free all political prisoners. Let us fight to restore all the democratic rights of all the nationalities in the world. □



Crimean Tatar families dumped at the train station after they were expelled when they tried to return to Crimea. Photo from *Uncensored Russia*, edited by Peter Reddaway.

Mustafa Dzhemilev, One of the World's Soldiers for Justice

by Ralph Schoenman

Comrades and friends, you have heard tonight most eloquently of the plight and the fate of the Crimean Tatars. We have heard from Pavel Litvinov and from Reza Baraheni of the full measure of the persecution of this people. And the language has been the language of deportation and cattle trucks; of half a nation being liquidated; of reservations, of convoys, of prison, and of genocide.

Mustafa Dzhemilev wrote a historical essay on Turkic culture in the Crimea from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries—a major and important scholarly treatise on the history of his people. And for this work he was charged with slanderous fabrications and with discrediting the Soviet social and state system. He was sentenced to three years in prison, and almost immediately upon his release he was imprisoned again.

When he wrote the history of the Crimean Tatar people, the Uzbek KGB hunted down every last copy to burn and destroy. In effect then, this regime has sought to take from the Tatars and from Mustafa Dzhemilev a language, a culture, a historical tradition, a very identity. They have taken individual liberty and intellectual freedom, and they have sought to take the nationality from Mustafa Dzhemilev.

We have to ask the question, then, Who is doing this? What is the nature

of a regime which is capable of genocide, the annihilation of a people, and the elimination of its cultural heritage? How can the leadership of the Soviet Union call itself socialist when it performs these acts? For every revolutionary, for every socialist, for every Marxist, the question is posed: what, then, is socialism if such things are done in its name? What is the relation between socialism and liberty?

Socialism and Democracy

Repeatedly, when people attempt to defend human rights and liberty and democracy in the Soviet Union, the question is put, are you not then defending bourgeois democracy? Part of the legacy of this persecution is the attempt to equate democracy itself with bourgeois society. But democracy is a revolutionary heritage. It was not given to anybody; it was taken, wherever it has been had, through revolutionary struggle. And indeed it is of the essence of the Marxist and of the socialist tradition that democracy is inseparable from what we are fighting for.

The complaint of Marxists about bourgeois democracy is that it is a facade without content, that the democratic forms do not correspond to how power is structured, that it is an oligarchy ruling and disguising its rule through what would appear to be

democratic institutions. Thus, it is not democracy which is bourgeois, it is the attempt to empty democracy of the opportunity to exist and to function.

So, the program of socialists is not the elimination of democracy, but its extension. In the *Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels say, "the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy."

Marx and Engels continue: "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

It is consistent with the legacy of Stalinism that it attempted the genocide of the Tatar people, because this regime has nothing in common with Marx, with Engels, with the socialist tradition, or with democracy. It is because it is the rule of an oligarchy, an oligarchy that subsists in the most extreme of privilege, that such brutal oppression is a sine qua non of its continued existence.

"How can the leadership of the Soviet Union call itself socialist when it performs these acts?"

What is the legacy of this Stalinist regime which would equate the absence of liberty with socialism, which would equate repression and revolution, which would state that to be in sympathy with liberty is to be a reformist? How can we go to workers and call this regime socialist when there is no right to free speech, no free press, no right to strike, no independent trade unions, where genocide is committed, where 20 million Soviet citizens have passed through and perished in concentration camps in the Soviet Union?

A regime that has a political system parallel to that of fascism—that is the root of the persecution of the Crimean Tatars. And how do we as socialists go to members of oppressed national minorities anywhere in the world—to Blacks in the United States, to American Indians and Chicanos—and speak of socialism if we equate that socialism with the barbarous regime in the Soviet Union.

The Indonesian army, which massacred a half million workers and peasants and students in 1965, was armed by the Soviet Union. And after the coup, when the fate of these people was in the balance, Kosygin sent a message—not to Sukarno or Subandrio—but to Roeslan Abdul Gani, one of the architects of this butchery, tantamount to saying slaughter away.



Ralph Schoenman

And what do we say to the people of Iran as Mao embraces the shah? In the *Manifesto* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels speak of what they call reactionary or feudal socialism: "In political practice, therefore, they join in all coercive measures against the working

class; and in ordinary life, despite their high-falutin phrases, they stoop to pick up the golden apples dropped from the tree of industry, and to barter truth, love, and honor for traffic in wool, beetroot-sugar, and potato spirits."

We had a program of socialism which was synonymous with liberty; who took that program? We had a banner of class struggle which embodied national self-determination; who dirtied that banner? We had a language of socialism as expressed in *State and Revolution*, the language of workers democracy; who destroyed that language and made words mean their opposite?

"In effect, then, this regime has sought to take from the Tatars and from Mustafa Dzhemilev a language, a culture, a historical tradition, a very identity."

And what of colonialism? Who has equated socialism with the exploitation of national minorities?

I want to take a moment to speak about the fate of the Jews, not only in Europe and not only of the holocaust, but of their persecution in the Soviet Union. And as a Jew myself, I want to say that if ever a people should understand the meaning of deportation, the meaning of genocide, the meaning of being a refugee, it ought to be the Jews. And thus, it is the Jews who should be the first to denounce Zionism, precisely because it is the oppression of a national minority.

It is one thing to immigrate to a country; it is another thing to colonize it. And it is precisely that equation that puts Mustafa Dzhemilev in the front ranks not only of the defense of Jews in the Soviet Union, but of the cause of the Palestinians, because it is the same cause.

It was Ezra Pound who said that the technique of infamy is to invent two lies and to get people arguing heatedly over which one of them is true.

And those who would tell us that we should mute our criticism of Stalinism, of this bureaucratic, parasitic caste in the Soviet Union, I would remind them of Eugene V. Debs, who said, to paraphrase him, It is better to support what you want and not get it, than to support what you do not want and get it.

So, Mustafa Dzhemilev, one of the world's soldiers for justice, I want to remind you of the fate of Malcolm X. I was with Malcolm a week before his death, in London. He had just returned from Africa, where he had been stalked by the American CIA from Dakar to Dar es Salaam, to Cairo, where he was poisoned.

Malcolm said to me and to a friend, Kojo Amoo, "If they knew what I had in my head they would put a bullet through it."

Kojo pleaded with Malcolm to wear a bulletproof vest. Malcolm said bulletproof vests won't do. The task is to build a political, mobilized movement. The task is to create a national struggle. The task is to link that struggle to similar struggles around the world.

When Malcolm was murdered in New York, he left a small part of himself in every young Black in the United States.

To Comrade Mustafa we say, we will never forget you. Masses of oppressed people will carry your banner, will speak in your language, the language of liberty, of democracy, and of national rights. It is your ideals, your example, which will inspire humankind, not that of your oppressors.

And I say they will carry that banner, Mustafa Dzhemilev, forward to revolution, forward to a socialist revolution which will embody freedom, individual liberty, the flourishing of national culture, and the greatest extension of democracy the world has ever known. □

Follow the Same Principles That Won My Freedom

by Martin Sostre

It is a great pleasure to be here, after being in prison for nine years. I was the victim of a frame-up because I fought for human rights and because I had the only bookstore in Buffalo, New York, that was disseminating socialist and political literature—literature dealing with the struggle for Black liberation here in this country, the struggle for Puerto Rican independence, literature against the war in Vietnam, and all progressive literature. That bookstore in Buffalo became a center for persons of conscience, for youths who were seeking guidance, for college students.

Naturally, the power structure did not like this, and as a result I was framed. And this is what happened in all of the Black ghettos, especially during the 1960s, and is still happening now.

As a political prisoner and a person of conscience, I suffered eleven beatings in solitary confinement. After one of those beatings I was framed by the same guards who assaulted me. They claimed I was the one who jumped the goon squad of seven that assaulted me. This resulted in another conviction and another four years to run consecutively with the savage sentence I was already serving.

This is how they operate in this country. They make everything legal. That's how this country can claim that there aren't any political prisoners, because they use the law to repress. I don't have to tell you about all of the scandals. It is in the press even today about the FBI agents who are burglars, the CIA agents who are murderers. All the disclosures show that this whole

country—from the chief executive in the White House down to the little corrupt cop on the beat who shakes down drug peddlers and frames them when they don't pay—this entire system is corrupt, racist, and repressive.

As a former political prisoner, I consider Mustafa as well as other political prisoners throughout the world my brothers because I can really identify with political frame-up and repression persons of conscience who fought for human rights and dignity. And I oppose all regimes who oppress and silence the opposition.

But the very fact that I am here now, after being given forty-one years and then four consecutive years on top of that, is proof positive that even the most repressive state can be forced to disgorge its political prisoners and victims of its oppression.

Why did they release me after giving me forty-one years and then four years? Certainly they didn't have a change of heart all of a sudden.

My case is the classic case of what can be done to free a political prisoner. The only reason they released me, or were forced to release me, was because of pressure. That is the only thing that repressive governments understand. Massive pressure, using all means necessary.

There were about eight defense committees throughout this country that were formed in my behalf. In addition to that, many political groups and individuals joined with my defense committees in picketing and demonstrations, sit-ins, letter-writing campaigns,

and petitions. We flooded them with thousands upon thousands of letters.

My defense committee went to Albany and picketed Governor Rockefeller right at the state office building. We gave him no rest. Father Dan Berrigan and his crew sat in at [New York] Governor Carey's office and forced him to have a meeting with them.

Amnesty International in Germany, which was the group that adopted my case in that country, sent contingents to the American ambassador demanding my release. In Holland also, the American ambassador was confronted by delegations of persons from Amnesty International demanding that they release Martin Sostre.

Placards, posters, that's the only language they understand. You have to put a fire to their butts.

“It was a cumulative effort of people of conscience, thousands all over the world, that won my freedom, and I am living proof of it . . . that is what we are going to do for all political prisoners.”

My being here is a victory of the people. Of course, I served nine years, but I had forty-one years and four years consecutive. So actually I'm not supposed to be here. When they gave me that forty-one years I was not a kid; I was forty-four years old then. That sentence meant that I would never see daylight again. It was the equivalent of a death sentence. And yet here I am in the struggle, and they know that they have a staunch revolutionary against them because they never succeeded in breaking my spirit despite the eleven beatings, despite the years in solitary confinement, despite the tear gassings, despite being taken out-of-doors in subfreezing weather buck naked to try

to destroy my health. And they will do everything in order to break spirits and obtain complete obedience to their repression. That I could never submit to. Not even the threat of death could force me to do that.

As a matter of fact in the combined eight years that I spent in solitary confinement I have lost that fear of death. Because I have been through hell and I know how to fight the devil.

So these are the tactics that we have to use to release Mustafa and all other political prisoners.

This is the most repressive country in the world, oppressive on a world scale. It is a colonialist country that still has colonies like Puerto Rico, a country that, along with South Africa, is one of the most racist regimes in the world. It is a country whose very foundations are on slavery and genocide. The slaughter of the Indians, the enslavement and importation of Blacks, who at this very moment are still maintained in segregated communities. And our president has proclaimed that he will try to do everything possible in order to continue the forced segregation of schoolchildren.

This country claims to celebrate a bicentennial based on liberty. And yet the very founding fathers—George Washington and the rest of them—were slaveowners. The only liberty they were talking about was the liberty to oppress and exploit their slaves and not share the profits with the British.

So if victory can be achieved here, as repressive and hypocritical as this country is, it can be achieved elsewhere too.

I was a person with no funds. No celebrities came to my help, except at the very end. Only when [Andrei] Sakharov spoke from Russia in my behalf did I get any widespread publicity. And yet it was groups like this one, of persons of conscience in many parts of this country, small but determined groups, not only in this country but in

Germany, in Japan, in Holland, and other places where there are Amnesty International branches. It was a cumulative effort of all of these people of conscience, thousands all over the world that have won my freedom, and I am living proof of it.

“The only reason they were forced to release me was because of pressure. That is the only thing that repressive governments understand.”

And this is what we are going to do for all political prisoners. All we have to do is to follow the same principles that have won my freedom. Put on the pressure and embarrass repressive regimes that try to pass themselves off

as being democratic. By giving them the lie, they will be forced to release the political prisoners in order to maintain the image of a civilized country.

So I urge you to intensify your efforts in every way, physically and financially, because it costs money, leaflets have to be printed, halls have to be rented, telephone bills have to be paid. Put your body on the line when picketing is needed. Help to send letters and petitions. Use all means necessary.

The balance of power in this world is on our side. We *will* have the egalitarian society that we all seek, a society where we will be able to enjoy all of our human rights and dignities and where we can all share the wealth of the world—and there is plenty here for everyone. The greedy ruling class who monopolizes the wealth must be replaced by humanity, who will share the wealth in common. □



Martin Sostre

The following poem by Reza Baraheni was read by him and dedicated to Mustafa Dzhemilev at a meeting in defense of Soviet political prisoners in New York City, April 3, 1976.

Just as the culture and language of the Crimean Tatars has been suppressed by the Russian chauvinist policies of the present Soviet government, the culture and language of Reza's people, the Azerbaijani Turkish people, has been suppressed in Iran by the Persian chauvinist policies of the Shah. Reza, therefore, wrote as a literary critic and as a poet in Iran in the Persian language.

This poem, however, is from a collection of poems in a manuscript "Book of Masks and Paragraphs," written by Reza in English.

A DOUBLE MASK
Our Mission in Arras*

For: Mustafa Dzhemilev

The snow is melting in Julfa now**
Our mother sits on the southern bank
Watching the easy flow of the river
Our bones pass in the undercurrent
Our mother knows this and smiles

A dissident poet from Russia whispers to me
I whisper back
We smile. We depart
Soft pieces of ice pass between us
Sheets of wave cover us
Our anchors pull us to the bottom of the river
Our mother watches us and smiles

Where shall I go, Comrade? I ask
I was killed once in Turkestan in 1935
A second time in Georgia in 1952
A third time in Tabriz in 1953
And a fourth time in Tehran in 1973
Where do our bones meet again?
When do our ankles whisper again?

Is it the time or the place that counts?
You mention both, but I wonder
Don't you think we had better forget
Both the Shah and Stalin, and let our
Grinding bones rest in peace?
Night is falling, tell me, or if you cannot,
Let's have another appointment,
Give our ankles another chance to whisper each to each?

*A border river between Iran and the Soviet Union where dissidents of both countries are rumored to have been drowned.

**An Iranian town on the border.

Keep your voice down
The water is recording our voices
Our testicles are tapped
The movements of our shoulders are being taped
Be hermetic, so the police won't understand

Our mother watches us and smiles

The river has a sound when you are far away
When you are in it the river is silent
It runs over you like a poem without words

Let's forget the dictators for a second
And think of poetry, comrade!
I want the words of a poem to think about the poem
When I think about the words
Dictators walk in; when the words think about
The poem poetry walks in; I like the sun
Thinking about the sun; the tree thinking
About the tree; and they both thinking about
Both of us; whisper on brother, whisper!

They shot me after I was dead
Did you know that?
They pretended I didn't die under torture
Did you know that?
I offered to recant
They thought I was even too dangerous for that
Did you know that?
Only the river knows I'm here
My bones speak to the river
As your words speak to the poem
The river runs through me
As the poem runs through you

Our mother watches us and smiles

A shadow has passed over the world
The fish know the meaning of the shadow
They are rushing away to the sea

Are they building a dam over our bones?
Is there a joint project to get rid of language?
Are we the mice they use for future discoveries?
Perhaps ages have passed
They are drilling a well over our hearts
We'll suddenly leap to the sky
Catch fire in the sun
And burn the earth to dust
And burn the earth to dust

Our mother watches us and smiles

Let's have another disappointment
Or rather
Let's have another appointment

□

Reprinted from the *New York Review of Books*

Is it a crime to speak out against national oppression and genocide? Mustafa Dzhemilev, a Soviet dissident, was recently sentenced to two-and-one-half years imprisonment for just such activities in defense of his people, the Crimean Tatars, a Moslem, Turkic people in the USSR.

When Mustafa was just one year old, in 1944, the entire population of Crimean Tatars were forcibly deported to Central Asia where they have been held ever since. Almost half of the population died during the deportation and the first years of exile. Although the charges against them were formally dropped in 1967, the Tatars have not been allowed to return to the Crimea. Petitions demanding the right to return to their homeland have been signed by over a hundred thousand Tatars and brought to Moscow by elected representatives from each village.

Mustafa has participated in this non-violent struggle since childhood. He was expelled from college for speaking and writing about the history of the Crimean Tatars. He was first arrested in 1966 on the false charge of draft evasion and served one and a half years in a labor camp. In Moscow as an elected representative of the Tatars, he joined with other dissidents to form the Initiative Group for Defense of Human Rights in the USSR and denounced the occupation of Czechoslovakia. He was arrested for "slandering the Soviet state" and spent three years in a strict regime camp. In 1974 he was rearrested for draft evasion and was sentenced to another year in a strict regime camp. When this sentence was about to end, he was again charged with "slandering the Soviet state." He began a hunger strike to protest against this treatment, but in April 1976 he was sentenced to two-and-one-half years imprisonment. His health is very poor due to the harsh conditions and his prolonged hunger strike.

We must condemn this unjust verdict and demand that the Soviet authorities release Mustafa Dzhemilev immediately. Free speech and support for the right of oppressed nationalities are not crimes. They should not be punishable in the Soviet Union, in the United States, or anywhere else. We are soliciting support for Dzhemilev among those who defend prisoners of conscience, democratic rights, and the rights of oppressed nationalities in the West as well as in the East—aiming to organize the kind of mass protest which the Soviet government cannot ignore.

Reza Baraheni, former Iranian political prisoner
Pavel Litvinov, former Soviet dissident
Martin Sostre, former American political prisoner

We need your help!

The efforts to publicize the facts on Dzhemilev's case and on the national oppression of the Crimean Tatars requires funds.

There are leaflets to be printed, halls to be rented, phone bills to be paid, as Martin Sostre pointed out. In addition, there are new materials describing the persecution of Crimean Tatars, Dzhemilev's trial and present situation, appeals from Crimean Tatars, etc., that continue to emerge from the Soviet Union—all of which should be published and widely distributed. We need to print more pamphlets like this one, a newsletter, and brochures.

Further, carrying on the defense work for Dzhemilev's release and bringing his case to public attention requires more meetings like the June 24 meeting, and more picket lines like the October 18 picket line.

All of these activities cost hundreds of dollars, and the only source of such funds is people of conscience like yourself.

We hope you will see fit to help in this work and send whatever amount you can.

First published in December 1976 by the Mustafa Dzhemilev Defense Committee, 853 Broadway, Room 414, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Additional copies of this pamphlet can be obtained from The Mustafa Dzhemilev Defense Committee as follows:

1 to 4 copies	\$.50 each
Additional copies	\$.35 each

A 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch button with Mustafa Dzhemilev's picture and the caption FREE MUSTAFA DZHEMILEV CRIMEAN TATAR LEADER is available at \$.35 each or \$.20 each when purchasing 4 or more.

Clip and mail this coupon to the Mustafa Dzhemilev Defense Committee, 853 Broadway, Room 414, New York, New York, 10003 Phone (212) 533-9238.

_____ I support your efforts to win the release of Mustafa Dzhemilev.

_____ I want to contribute \$ _____

_____ Please send me _____ additional copies of this pamphlet and _____ buttons.

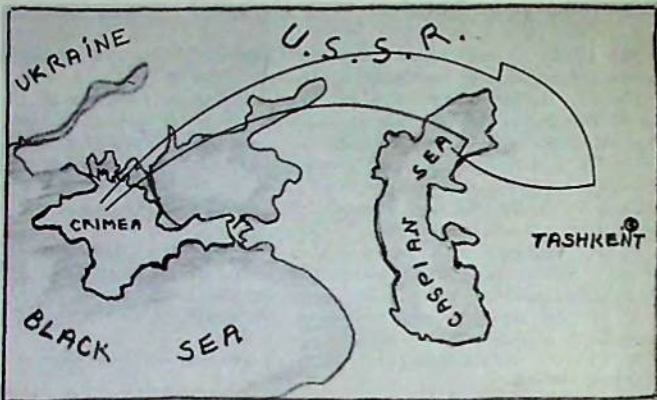
_____ Please send me additional information.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____



Arrow indicates general route of Stalin's 1944 deportation of Crimean Tatar population to Central Asia.

Endorsers of the Mustafa Dzhemilev Defense Committee include:

Eqbal Ahmad, antiwar activist

Dore Ashton, art critic

Reza Baraheni, poet, former Iranian political prisoner

Eric Bentley, author, playwright

Philip Berrigan, antiwar activist

Daniel Berrigan, poet, antiwar activist

Noam Chomsky, linguist

Ruth Gage-Colby, anti-war leader

Abdeen Jabara, editor of *Free Palestine*.

Pavel Litvinov, exiled Soviet dissident

Salvador Luria, biologist, Nobel prize winner

David McReynolds, War Resisters League

M.T. Mehdi, Action Committee on American Arab Relations

Seymour Melman, professor, Columbia University

Joan Mellen, film critic

Kate Millett, feminist author

Aryeh Neier, executive director of the ACLU

George Saunders, editor *Samizdat: Voices of Soviet Opposition*

Grace Paley, author, antiwar activist

Juan Jose Peña, chairman of the Partido de la Raza Unida de Nueva Mexico

Claude Ross, chairman of the Black Economic Development Conference

Ralph Schoenman, organizer of the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal

Martin Sostre, former American political prisoner

I.F. Stone, journalist

George Wald, biologist, Nobel Prize winner

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