

The original documents are located in Box D14, folder “House Speech Soviet Security and Khokhlov, June 16, 1954” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. The Council donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

*Statement by Representative Gerald R. Ford Jr.
House of Representatives - Wed, June 16, 1954*

*For release
Wed PM.*

Mr. Speaker,

Before me I have an Associated Press news story which has shocked all Americans and others in the free world. It reads as follows:

"Mrs. Nikolai Khokhlov Vanishes in Moscow -

The wife left behind by Soviet ~~Secret Police~~ Capt. Nikolai Khokhlov defected when he ~~deserted~~ to the west last February ~~had~~ disappeared in Moscow, *Intelligence* *is reported to have* *This* eastern officials said here today. Diplomatic reports received from the

Soviet capital, said Mrs. Yanina Khokhlov vanished without trace from her three room apartment several weeks ago and apparently is in secret police custody.

"Khokhlov, who backed down on a Red assignment to kill a Russian resistance leader in Frankfurt, had appealed to the free world to help save his family from what he said were certain Soviet reprisals, possibly death.

His wife, the 31 year old Russian said, had persuaded him not to go thru with the plot to do away with George S. Okelevich, anti-communist leader, with the special weapons - including a cyanide poison pistol shaped like a cigaret case - with which he had been equipped.

"The reports did not make clear what has happened to the Khokhlov's



Statement by Representative Gerald R. Ford
House of Representatives - Wed, June 16, 1954

Mr. Speaker,

For release
Wed PM

Before me I have an Associated Press news story which has shocked all Americans and others in the free world. It reads as follows:

"Mrs. Nikolai Khokhlev Vanishes in Moscow"

The wife left behind by Soviet Secret Police Capt. Nikolai Khokhlev defected when he deserted to the west last February ~~had~~ disappeared in Moscow. This ~~easter~~ officials said here today. Diplomatic reports received from the

Soviet capital, said Mrs. Yanina Khekhlav vanished without trace from her three room apartment several weeks ago and apparently is in secret police custody.

"Khokhlev, who backed down on a Red assignment to kill a Russian resistance leader in Frankfurt, had appealed to the free world to help save his

family from what he said were certain Soviet reprisals, possibly death.

His wife, the 31 year old Russian said, had persuaded him not to go thru with the plot to do away with George S. Okelevich, anti-communist leader, with the special weapons - including a cyanide poison pistol shaped like a cigaret case - with which he had been equipped.

"The reports did not make clear what has happened to the Khokhlev's



18 month old son and the 14 year old sister of Mrs. Kheklev, who lived with them."

In recent months we have had dramatic evidence of some increasing insecurity in the ranks of formerly trusted officials in the Soviet government. Defections of Soviet secret service officers are intensely obviously most interesting - in a somewhat negative way - because they reflect the psychological ferment and growing unrest of which the Beria purges were also a manifestation. This is the atmosphere of dictatorship, which feeds on blood and fear.

At this particular moment in our history - when our most vital concern is the meaning of freedom and the meaning of what it is to be human - we can, however, look at these defections in a more positive light. Each man who breaks with his past normally does so for some unique, personal reason. The reasons are seldom clear cut, but they are always basically human. A man is afraid of punishment for some misdeed. He seeks a better material life. Or, in the very apt phrase of one defector, "I left the Soviet Union because I wanted to be a Russian."



A few days ago I had an unusual opportunity to meet and talk at some length with one of these defectors - Nikolai Khokhlov - the man assigned by Soviet intelligence to assassinate a Russian emigre in Germany. You have read his story in the press. Recently, he testified before the Senate Sub-committee on Internal Security. Khokhlov stands as an example of the fact that human beings can never be mentally enslaved. His refusal to carry out his assignment to commit murder was an independent, unselfish decision which corroborates the basic principles of free Christian society. It further corroborates the fact that the Soviet government has not renounced the old policy of wilful and deliberate terror and oppression to achieve its goals. How is this Soviet policy compatible with its current claims of seeking closer, more friendly relations with other nations? How does this planned and premeditated mission by the Soviet hierarchy fit in with the picture of happy life promised to its own people?

If Khokhlov had fulfilled his assignment, if he had killed a fellow human being whom the MGB wanted liquidated, he would have been showered by his diabolical supervisors in the Kremlin with favors and honors - promotion, bonuses, and citations. But fortunately Khokhlov is



a human being with a conscience - a concept rejected by fundamental Communist doctrine and the Soviet regime. He is married to a woman of deep religious convictions - a faith in God denied by Communist doctrine and the Soviet regime. To put it straightforwardly Khokhlov could not carry out an order to murder another human being. Such an act was contrary to his and his wife's moral principles. His defection was due not to fear or the need to escape a purge or his desire for material advantage. It was the result of a growing certainty that he could not live the life of Soviet Communism or continue as a servant of the secret policy^{e?} and still conform to fundamental principles of decency and morality.

His defection, therefore, has a deeper meaning for all Americans. By refusing to carry out his assignment, Khokhlov affirmed our fundamental beliefs in the value of the individual, in human dignity, in the right of all people to live in freedom from fear, freedom from oppression, and freedom from violence.

Behind Khokhlov stands his wife, who guided and strengthened him in these decisions. With full knowledge of possibly fatal consequences



to herself and their child, she urged her husband to follow his conscience, to follow the best traditions of humanity. For all of us she is a symbol of courage and independence, ~~of freedom and human dignity.~~ Yet today, *she epitomizes the finest standards of those principles.* from a recent Associated Press dispatch, we know that despite appeals to the Soviet government to allow her to join her husband, she and her small child are missing from her Moscow apartment. Although she may be in the hands of the secret police, those ideals for which she stands are confirmed again and again by free men everywhere - in their homes, on the battlefield, at the conference table. Their goal is a world where no man will be forced to show his courage under the conditions faced by the Khokhlovs.

It is evident from the action of this woman and her husband - and from the action of others who have renounced tyranny - that America and freedom have a strong but often silent ally, living and thinking behind the bars of dictatorship. We know from many defectors that there are thousands of Russians who have renounced Soviet tyranny and who look quietly for assurance and understanding from outside the borders of the Soviet world. For us this fact is of vast importance: these people represent a force for freedom, a force potentially far mightier than all the machines of destruction which a police state can turn upon its opponents.



The Khokhlovs have placed ^{his} their trust in the free world.

~~His~~ Their decision to reject murder and oppression as exemplified by the diabolical Soviet rulers, knowing full well the consequences, and to seek a new life under freedom dramatically emphasizes the utter lack of morality among such men as Malenkov, Molotov, Panyushkin, Khrushchev, and the others.

The sequel to the Khokhlev story, however it may finally be written on the indelible pages of history, can convey in concrete terms the understanding and reassurance for which those silent Russian allies wait. The outcome depends first of all upon the force and conviction with which the people of the free world express their moral support of the Khokhlevs. We who are blessed with freedom and liberty, a form of government predicated on the dignity of man and leaders who are dedicated to high moral principles must demand of the Soviet leaders that they respond to one single instance of decency and free the wife and child of Nikolai Khokhlev. Yes, the final word rests with the Soviet government. Will it by continued silence admit its disregard of the principles it professes? Or is it able to grant at least two defenseless



Page 7

beings, a mother and a child, the right to the kind of life in which
they believe?



Statement by Representative Gerald R. Ford, Jr.,

House of Representatives - Wednesday, June 16, 1954

FOR RELEASE - Wednesday, P.M.

Mr. Speaker -

Before me I have an Associated Press news story which has shocked all Americans and others in the free world. It reads as follows:

"Mrs. Nikolai Khokhlov Vanishes in Moscow - Bonn, Germany, June 2 (AP) --

"The wife left behind by Soviet Intelligence Capt. Nikolai Khokhlov when he defected to the west last February is reported to have disappeared in Moscow. This report, received from the Soviet capital, said Mrs. Yanina Khokhlov vanished without trace from her three room apartment several weeks ago and apparently is in secret police custody.

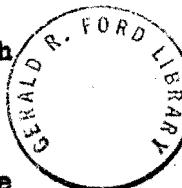
"Khokhlov, who backed down on a Red assignment to kill a Russian resistance leader in Frankfurt, had appealed to the free world to help save his family from what he said were certain Soviet reprisals, possibly death. His wife, the 31 year old Russian said, had persuaded him not to go thru with the plot to do away with George S. Okolovich, anti-communist leader, with the special weapons - including a cyanide poison pistol shaped like a cigaret case - with which he had been equipped.

"The reports did not make clear what has happened to the Khokhlov's 18 month old son and the 14 year old sister of Mrs. Khokhlov, who lived with them."

In recent months we have had dramatic evidence of some increasing insecurity in the ranks of formerly trusted officials in the Soviet government. Defections of Soviet secret service officers are intensely interesting - in a somewhat negative way - because they reflect the psychological ferment and growing unrest of which the Beria purges were also a manifestation. This is the atmosphere of dictatorship, which feeds on blood and fear.

At this particular moment in our history - when our most vital concern is the meaning of freedom and the meaning of what it is to be human - we can, however, look at these defections in a more positive light. Each man who breaks with his past normally does so for some unique, personal reason. The reasons are seldom clear cut, but they are always basically human. A man is afraid of punishment for some misdeed. He seeks a better material life. Or, in the very apt phrase of one defector, "I left the Soviet Union because I wanted to be a Russian."

A few days ago I had an unusual opportunity to meet and talk at some length with one of these defectors - Nikolai Khokhlov - the man assigned by Soviet intelligence to assassinate a Russian emigre in Germany. You have read his story in the



press. Recently, he testified before the Senate Sub-committee on Internal Security. Khokhlov stands as an example of the fact that human beings can never be mentally enslaved. His refusal to carry out his assignment to commit murder was an independent, unselfish decision which corroborates the basic principles of free Christian society. It further corroborates the fact that the Soviet government has not renounced the old policy of wilful and deliberate terror and oppression to achieve its goals. At this time it is highly appropriate to ask this question - How is this Soviet policy compatible with its current claims of seeking closer, more friendly relations with other nations? How does this planned and premeditated mission by the Soviet hierarchy fit in with the picture of happy life promised to its own people?

If Khokhlov had fulfilled his assignment, if he had killed a fellow human being whom the MGB wanted liquidated, he would have been showered by his diabolical supervisors in the Kremlin with favors and honors - promotion, bonuses, and citations. But fortunately Khokhlov is a human being with a conscience - a concept rejected by fundamental Communist doctrine and the Soviet regime. He is married to a woman of deep religious convictions - a faith in God denied by Communist doctrine and the Soviet regime. To put it straightforwardly Khokhlov could not carry out an order to murder another human being. Such an act was contrary to his and his wife's moral principles. His defection was due not to fear or the need to escape a purge, or his desire for material advantage. It was the result of a growing certainty that he could not live the life of Soviet Communism or continue as a servant of the secret police, and still conform to fundamental principles of decency and morality. His defection, therefore, has a deeper meaning for all Americans. By refusing to carry out his assignment, Khokhlov affirmed our fundamental beliefs in the value of the individual, in human dignity, in the right of all people to live in freedom from fear, freedom from oppression, and freedom from violence.

Behind Khokhlov stands his wife, who guided and strengthened him in these decisions. With full knowledge of possibly fatal consequences to herself and their child, she urged her husband to follow his conscience, to follow the best traditions of humanity. For all of us she is a symbol of courage and independence. She epitomizes the finest of God's principles. Yet today, from a recent Associated Press dispatch, we know that despite appeals to the Soviet government to allow her to join her husband, she and her small child are missing from her Moscow apartment. Although she may be in the hands of the secret police, those ideals for which she stands are confirmed again and again by free men everywhere - in their homes, on the battlefield, at the conference table. Their goal is a world where no man will be forced to show his courage under the conditions faced by the Khokhlovs.

It is evident from the action of this woman and her husband - and from the action of others who have renounced tyranny - that America and freedom have a strong but often silent ally, living and thinking behind the bars of dictatorship. We know from many defectors that there are thousands of Russians who have renounced Soviet tyranny and who look quietly for assurance and understanding from outside the borders of the Soviet world. For us this fact is of vast importance: these people represent a force for freedom, a force potentially far mightier than all the machines of destruction which a police state can turn upon its opponents.

Khokhlov has placed his trust in the free world. His decision to reject murder and oppression as exemplified by the diabolical Soviet rulers, knowing full well the consequences, and to seek a new life under freedom dramatically emphasizes the utter lack of morality among such men as Malenkov, Molotov, Panyushkin, Khrushchev, and the others.

The sequel to the Khokhlov story, however it may finally be written on the indelible pages of history, can convey in concrete terms the understanding and reassurance for which those silent Russian allies wait. The outcome depends first of all upon the force and conviction with which the people of the free world express their moral support of the Khokhlovs. We who are blessed with freedom and liberty, a form of government predicated on the dignity of man and leaders who are dedicated to high moral principles must demand of the Soviet leaders that they respond to one single instance of decency and free the wife and child of Nikolai Khokhlov. Yes, the final word rests with the Soviet government. Will it by continued silence admit its disregard of the principles it professes? Or is it able to grant at least two defenseless beings, a mother and a child, the right to the kind of life in which they believe?

• • •



Statement by Representative Gerald R. Ford, Jr.,

House of Representatives - Wednesday, June 16, 1954

FOR RELEASE - Wednesday, P.M.

Mr. Speaker -

Before me I have an Associated Press news story which has shocked all Americans and others in the free world. It reads as follows:

"Mrs. Nikolai Khokhlov Vanishes in Moscow - Bonn, Germany, June 2 (AP) - -

"The wife left behind by Soviet Intelligence Capt. Nikolai Khokhlov when he defected to the west last February is reported to have disappeared in Moscow. This report, received from the Soviet capital, said Mrs. Yanina Khokhlov vanished without trace from her three room apartment several weeks ago and apparently is in secret police custody.

"Khokhlov, who backed down on a Red assignment to kill a Russian resistance leader in Frankfurt, had appealed to the free world to help save his family from what he said were certain Soviet reprisals, possibly death. His wife, the 31 year old Russian said, had persuaded him not to go thru with the plot to do away with George S. Okolovich, anti-communist leader, with the special weapons - including a cyanide poison pistol shaped like a cigaret case - with which he had been equipped.

"The reports did not make clear what has happened to the Khokhlov's 18 month old son and the 14 year old sister of Mrs. Khokhlov, who lived with them."

In recent months we have had dramatic evidence of some increasing insecurity in the ranks of formerly trusted officials in the Soviet government. Defections of Soviet secret service officers are intensely interesting - in a somewhat negative way - because they reflect the psychological ferment and growing unrest of which the Beria purges were also a manifestation. This is the atmosphere of dictatorship, which feeds on blood and fear.

At this particular moment in our history - when our most vital concern is the meaning of freedom and the meaning of what it is to be human - we can, however, look at these defections in a more positive light. Each man who breaks with his past normally does so for some unique, personal reason. The reasons are seldom clear cut, but they are always basically human. A man is afraid of punishment for some misdeed. He seeks a better material life. Or, in the very apt phrase of one defector, "I left the Soviet Union because I wanted to be a Russian."

A few days ago I had an unusual opportunity to meet and talk at some length with one of these defectors - Nikolai Khokhlov - the man assigned by Soviet intelligence to assassinate a Russian emigre in Germany. You have read his story in the

press. Recently, he testified before the Senate Sub-committee on Internal Security. Khokhlov stands as an example of the fact that human beings can never be mentally enslaved. His refusal to carry out his assignment to commit murder was an independent, unselfish decision which corroborates the basic principles of free Christian society. It further corroborates the fact that the Soviet government has not renounced the old policy of wilful and deliberate terror and oppression to achieve its goals. At this time it is highly appropriate to ask this question - How is this Soviet policy compatible with its current claims of seeking closer, more friendly relations with other nations? How does this planned and premeditated mission by the Soviet hierarchy fit in with the picture of happy life promised to its own people?

If Khokhlov had fulfilled his assignment, if he had killed a fellow human being whom the MGB wanted liquidated, he would have been showered by his diabolical supervisors in the Kremlin with favors and honors - promotion, bonuses, and citations. But fortunately Khokhlov is a human being with a conscience - a concept rejected by fundamental Communist doctrine and the Soviet regime. He is married to a woman of deep religious convictions - a faith in God denied by Communist doctrine and the Soviet regime. To put it straightforwardly Khokhlov could not carry out an order to murder another human being. Such an act was contrary to his and his wife's moral principles. His defection was due not to fear or the need to escape a purge, or his desire for material advantage. It was the result of a growing certainty that he could not live the life of Soviet Communism or continue as a servant of the secret police, and still conform to fundamental principles of decency and morality. His defection, therefore, has a deeper meaning for all Americans. By refusing to carry out his assignment, Khokhlov affirmed our fundamental beliefs in the value of the individual, in human dignity, in the right of all people to live in freedom from fear, freedom from oppression, and freedom from violence.

Behind Khokhlov stands his wife, who guided and strengthened him in these decisions. With full knowledge of possibly fatal consequences to herself and their child, she urged her husband to follow his conscience, to follow the best traditions of humanity. For all of us she is a symbol of courage and independence. She epitomizes the finest of God's principles. Yet today, from a recent Associated Press dispatch, we know that despite appeals to the Soviet government to allow her to join her husband, she and her small child are missing from her Moscow apartment. Although she may be in the hands of the secret police, those ideals for which she stands are confirmed again and again by free men everywhere - in their homes, on the battlefield, at the conference table. Their goal is a world where no man will be forced to show his courage under the conditions faced by the Khokhlovs.

It is evident from the action of this woman and her husband - and from the action of others who have renounced tyranny - that America and freedom have a strong but often silent ally, living and thinking behind the bars of dictatorship. We know from many defectors that there are thousands of Russians who have renounced Soviet tyranny and who look quietly for assurance and understanding from outside the borders of the Soviet world. For us this fact is of vast importance: these people represent a force for freedom, a force potentially far mightier than all the machines of destruction which a police state can turn upon its opponents.

Khokhlov has placed his trust in the free world. His decision to reject murder and oppression as exemplified by the diabolical Soviet rulers, knowing full well the consequences, and to seek a new life under freedom dramatically emphasizes the utter lack of morality among such men as Malenkov, Molotov, Panyushkin, Khrushchev, and the others.

The sequel to the Khokhlov story, however it may finally be written on the indelible pages of history, can convey in concrete terms the understanding and reassurance for which those silent Russian allies wait. The outcome depends first of all upon the force and conviction with which the people of the free world express their moral support of the Khokhlovs. We who are blessed with freedom and liberty, a form of government predicated on the dignity of man and leaders who are dedicated to high moral principles must demand of the Soviet leaders that they respond to one single instance of decency and free the wife and child of Nikolai Khokhlov. Yes, the final word rests with the Soviet government. Will it by continued silence admit its disregard of the principles it professes? Or is it able to grant at least two defenseless beings, a mother and a child, the right to the kind of life in which they believe?

• • •

