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*Statement by Representative Gerald R. Ford
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 ^{*Intelligence*} ~~Secret Police~~ Capt. Nikolai Khokhlov
^{*defected*} when he ~~deserted~~ to the west last February ^{*is reported to have*} ~~has~~ disappeared in Moscow,
^{*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
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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* ~~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. *At this time it is highly appropriate to ask this question*
1 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^T 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, *she epitomizes the finest standards of Khrushchev's principles.*
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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 battle-

field, 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^s placed ~~their~~^{his} trust in the free world.

~~Their~~^{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^{PANYUSHKIN}, Khrushchev, and Khrushchev 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



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