

April 15, 1971

Miss Sylvia Meagher  
302 West 12th St.  
New York, N.Y. 10014

Dear Miss Meagher:

Dick Hall has highly recommended you as the person to contact when it comes to a question of documentation, particularly in regard to the following subject matter.

(On a more personal note, Dick asked me to convey his apology for not having written to you in such a long time.)

My associate and I have considerable information on the subject of "alleged abuses in Soviet psychiatry." However, we would like to be certain about the reliability of our sources. We have received considerable data from the Radio Liberty Committee (30 East 42nd St., N.Y., N.Y.), which has asked us not to cite it in anything we may write on the above-mentioned subject. Dick suggests that you would be in a position to evaluate the reliability of information coming from this source. For it would be most disturbing to discover that Radio Liberty was simply a rightist organization with an ax to grind.

A second source is a psychiatrist from Vancouver, British Columbia, a Dr. Norman B. Hirt, whom we understand has been trying for some time to get a resolution before the World Health Organization condemning alleged abuses in Soviet psychiatry. In an unpublished paper of his Dr. Hirt mentions several letters from Russian dissidents that supposedly are on record with the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. If these letters do exist, we would very much appreciate having copies if you are able to obtain them. Or perhaps you would be kind enough to recommend a source who could obtain them.

It is also our understanding that Dr. Hirt has been in touch with Dr. Edward L. Margetts, whom we understand is attached to the Mental Health Unit of WHO. From what we can gather, neither Margetts nor anyone at WHO is willing to broach the subject of alleged abuses in Soviet psychiatry within that body, despite many such accounts published in the press. Do you have any idea why this may be so? Has WHO taken any official or unofficial stand vis-a-vis the above?

We have in our possession what is supposed to be an open-letter to several Western psychiatrists from a Soviet writer by the name of Vladimir Bukovsky. This letter, dated Jan. 28, 1971, came to us by way of Radio Liberty. Again, we question its authenticity, and hope that there may be a copy of it on record with the United Nations Commission on Human Rights or perhaps with WHO

I sincerely hope that these requests are not too great an imposition on your time. Thanking you in advance, I am

Sincerely yours,  
*Hal Deneault*  
Hal Deneault

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