June 16,1975

President Nikolai V. Podgnorny
The Kremlin
Moscow
RSFSR, USSR

Sir:

I am writing to you, as the supreme voice of authority in the Soviet Union, to plead for the release of Dr. Mikhail Shtern.

Dr. Shtern by this time is a sick and tormented man, prematurely aged by his experiences. He suffers from severe health problems and I fear for his life under the regimen of the labor camp. Certainly, he will never survive to serve his eight-year sentence.

The Soviet Union today is one of the world's great powers. Its place among the nations is secure and does not depend on keeping one frail, sick man in prison. The prestige of the Soviet Union abroad can only be enhanced by a humanitarian and generous act of clemency in his case.

I and many of my colleagues in science have welcomed the reduction in tensions between our two countries as a result of the policy of detente. We are in the forefront of exchanges in science between the USSR and the United States. But those exchanges cannot take place without the collaboration and support of American scientists, and their enthusiasm for such cooperation is not encouraged when they read about Dr. Shtern or other Soviet scientists whose desire to emigrate to Israel has resulted in severe punishment.

I urge you to grant amnesty to Dr. Shtern, and allow him and his wife to leave so that they may join the remaining members of their family and live out their remaining years in peace.

Sincerely yours,

Marshall Nirenberg

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