

Sakharov's fate unknown to West

By Brooks Dareff
Of the Emerald

If a man does not keep silent it does not mean that he hopes necessarily to achieve something ... In almost every specific case of repression we really have no hope, and almost always there is a tragic absence of positive results.

— Andrei Sakharov, 1973

Andrei Sakharov, the detained Soviet nuclear physicist whose media attention seems to fade as his fate slips further into obscurity, can expect little help from the outside, according to a University historian.

According to sources close to Sakharov, the 1975 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate was taken from his home in Gorky on May 7, five days after he'd begun a hunger strike in an effort to compel the government to permit his wife, Yelena Bonner, to go abroad for medical treatment.

The Soviet news agency Tass has said that Bonner — who suffers from glaucoma, an eye infection and along with her husband, heart troubles — is treated by "the most experienced eye specialists." Where Sakharov is, and whether he has been hospitalized or is being force-fed, remains undisclosed.

"Sakharov's detention has its own internal

Hey Springfield are you listening?

WAHOO, Neb (AP) — There may not be seating for more than 300, and with a six-member police force, crowd control could be a bit of a problem. But that hasn't stopped this tiny southeast Nebraska town from inviting singer Michael Jackson for a visit.

"It's a serious invitation," said Sherry Treptow of the Wahoo Chamber of Commerce.

Well, maybe not so serious, she conceded. "But who knows? Maybe he'll decide he wants to come."

To sweeten the invitation, she said the town of 3,555 will declare Michael Jackson Day on July 13, the day of the proposed concert. Local merchants will offer presents such as sequins for his glove.

causes. Do what we will, we won't be able to alter it too much," says Alan Kimball, director of the Honors College.

Attention has focused on the 63-year-old Sakharov, one of the fathers of the world's first hydrogen bomb, because of his sustained series of run-ins with four generations of Soviet leadership. Once the pride of the Soviet nuclear military establishment, Sakharov has become its foremost critic, and the best-known spokesman of Soviet dissent.

"It's obvious he has the support of a lot of Soviet intellectuals," Kimball says.

In 1953, at age 32, Sakharov became the youngest full member ever elected to the USSR Academy of Sciences, and his immense success reaped many material rewards. But four years later, he could no longer work in tacit and silent obedience.

"Beginning in 1957," he once wrote, "I felt myself responsible for the problem of radioactive contamination from nuclear explosions."

Sakharov's futile attempts to impress his concerns on then Premier Nikita Khrushchev led him into a series of campaigns for freedoms of thought, dissent, travel and expression that began first as analysis and led finally into activism on behalf of dissidents less in favor than he.

Sakharov's activities also coincided with the "turning of the screws — the systematic crackdown on the expression of dissent of the Soviet intelligentsia," Kimball says.

"However, they (the Soviet leadership) were slow to crack down on him (Sakharov)," Kimball says.

Sakharov's detention from his home in the isolated city of Gorky — where he was first exiled by Soviet authorities in 1980 — has elicited an appeal by the Reagan Administration to allow Bonner and Sakharov to emigrate, or at least let Bonner receive medical treatment abroad.

But the Soviets, at best, are minimally affected by public and world opinion, Kimball says. And the Reagan years, which have been characterized by a turning away from the U.S.-Soviet detente of the three previous administrations, are not the best of times, Kimball says.

"The Soviets have no particular incentive to respond to opinion abroad," he says. "And people like Sakharov suffer."

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