

Preliminary Report
on Psychiatric Violations
of Human Rights in Russia
April 1999

Presented to:
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Introduction:

Ms. Jan Eastgate, CCHR's International President, has a 21-year-history of working for the reform of the mental health field. Ms. Sonia Gobbini has worked for 10 years as the Executive Director of CCHR Italy and has been a vital part of Italy's reform of its asylums which mirrored the conditions currently existing in Russian psychiatric institutions.

As the European representative for CCHR, Ms Gobbini joined Ms. Eastgate in Moscow, responding to complaints from Russian citizens filed with CCHR International's Website.

In particular, there was a common complaint that former Soviet psychiatric practices_punitive political/psychiatric abuse_had not ended and that abandoned children were being horribly abused and harmed in educational and mental health facilities.

Research showed that there was an ignorance, even a denial, that abuses existed, or that those individuals incarcerated in squalid conditions in psychiatric institutions were "deserving of it," that, after all, they were "crazy." Additionally, it was stated by some, including psychiatrists, that all problems in the mental health system were finance related, that the economic crisis in the country is the cause of psychiatric abuse. Nothing could be further than the truth.

Thirty years experience confirms that no matter how much money the psychiatric system is given, patients continue to be abused. Therefore, more severe preventative measures, with criminal penalties, are recommended.

While there are clearly moves to improve human rights in Russia, and laws have been introduced to protect normal and healthy individuals from being incarcerated and treated as mental patients, much remains to be done.

This report is a preliminary report on findings of a three-week investigation, centered in Moscow. A more in-depth report will be written later and presented to Russian and European Community authorities

Abuse Cases:

On January 13, 1999, the American documentary TV program 20/20, revealed the horrifying conditions children are subjected to in children's homes and institutions across Russia. This was initially exposed by the compelling report by Human Rights Watch in December, 1998.¹ The following case about a young girl named Sabina, highlights the plight of normal children being diagnosed as

imbeciles and ineducable. Quoting from this program, it stated: Sabina was "put in an orphanage because her poverty-stricken mother had a new baby and the family had to choose. Sabina doesn't know that she has now been labeled for life. 'What do you love most of all?' she's asked... 'Mommy.'

"Do you miss your mom?' 'Yes,' she answers. 'I always cry.'

"She wants to dance for the reporter and camera, she loves the idea of being able to ask questions, yet she has been labeled as an 'imbecile.' When a doctor looked at videotapes of her and of her medical records, he said that she 'may have some learning problems but still be perfectly educable.'

"Staff Member: 'As soon as the girls turn 18, we will transfer them to an adult asylum where they will remain.' Another child hears a life sentence, another child disputes it. 'I will be home,' Sabina says.2

Yuri is another case. He is 15-years old. He can communicate to 20/20 despite the language barrier and conveys how much he loves plants. He knows everything from plant names to their temperaments and grabs a book to show the visitors his preferred fertilizer, illustrated with a comic gesture_horse manure. Yet, he has been diagnosed as seriously retarded.3

The shocking levels of cruelty and neglect that more than 600,000 children classified as being "without parental care, are subjected to is known about in Russia but, according to The Russia Journal," is not widely publicized.

The Human Rights Watch Report is an appalling indictment of child abuse and human rights violations in Russia. However, where large scale psychological or psychiatric abuse of any group exists, underlying it we usually find fraudulent diagnostic methods that give "scientific" credibility or justification to the abuse. It is why such abuses can and have been ignored for many years.

For example, in the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom, millions of children have been placed on powerful psychiatric amphetamine-like drugs, such as Ritalin. Known to cause psychotic episodes if abused, to induce suicidal feelings during withdrawal from it, and to be used as an illegal street drug by teenagers, it is not surprising that drug abuse and suicide rates among children and teenagers are escalating. However, underlying this is the questionable and pseudo-scientific diagnosis, "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder" (ADHD).

The criteria for "ADHD" consists of fourteen points, including "has difficulty playing quietly," "often talks excessively," and "often loses things."

Dr. Fred A. Baughman, Jr., a neurologist and pediatric neurologist of 35 years, and Fellow of the American Academy of Neurology, has found no abnormality, nor sign of disease in children said to have ADHD or "learning disabilities." He refers to the diagnoses as "inventions, contrivances" and "100 percent fraud."4

The fact remains that Sabina can languish in an institution, not because she is mentally ill but because her parents couldn't afford to keep her_the questionable and unscientific diagnosis of "imbecile" has not only wrongly placed her there but sentenced her to a shockingly abusive life. In fact, this psychiatric diagnosis creates mental patients out of children.

The diagnosis is delivered by a state-run commission of doctors, psychologists, and educators based at the Chief Psychiatric Hospital No. 6 in Moscow. It is often based on the commission's one-time session with the child.5

According to the Human Rights Watch, "...in the best case [the children] are deemed educable, and proceed to a dyetskii dom run by the Ministry of Education, and attend regular schools. In the worst case, they are deemed severely ogliphronenic_either imbetsil or idiot_and condemned to a system of 'total institutions' run by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development. There they receive little or no education and only a minimum of maintenance until they

reach the age of eighteen, when they move on to an adult institution of the same kind...the death rate for children is twice that of children living at home."6

The children are assessed by a panel of strangers. According to a Russian medical professor and pediatric reconstruction surgeon, "Imagine asking an institutionalized child who's had no real parenting or contact with the outside world to perform for strangers. It becomes a self-fulfilling diagnosis." An institutional child is naturally "very shy, some are just petrified to face strangers, petrified and extremely mute, just standing like a stone in front of you. And that's it. They say, 'Oh, mental retardation' or 'mental defect.'"7

It is not our intention here to repeat the findings of the Human Rights Watch; their report vividly highlights how children are restrained in cloth sacks, tethered by limbs to furniture, denied stimulation and sometimes left to die half-naked in their own filth. Bedridden children aged between five and 17 are confined to understaffed lying down rooms and, in some cases, neglected to the point of death. Agitated orphans consigned to lying-down rooms are given powerful sedatives without medical supervision.8

These are "normal" but abandoned children: They are beaten, locked in freezing rooms for days at a time, abused physically and sexually. Children returning from two weeks to several months in a psychiatric hospital report the use of heavy tranquilizers and appear disoriented and confused.9

Fraudulent Diagnosing of Normal Children:

We emphasize, however, the wrongful diagnosis of normal or, even, slightly retarded children, and the subsequent harmful drugging of these children and adolescents. This is a form of fraud. A survey ten years ago by the Moscow State University found that 80 percent of diagnoses were inaccurate.10

Human Rights Watch reports: "Abandoned children who are diagnosed as 'oglophrenic' or mentally retarded, carry that label in their official dossier from institution to institution. They have no channels through which to see reassessment or reversal of this diagnosis...."11

This is a violation of international law: "International human rights law forbids discrimination on a variety of grounds, including 'birth or other status.' Under the United Nations' Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Person with Mental Illness and the Improvement of Mental Health Care,' Principle 4 provides that 'a determination of mental illness shall never be made on the basis of political, economic or social status, or membership of a cultural, racial or religious group, or any other reason not directly relevant to mental health status.'"12

Also, older patients interned in psychiatric hospitals for rule-breaking behavior, such as running away from a children's home, is a perversion of medical ethics and an alarming reminder of the gross misconduct of Soviet psychiatric times, where perfectly normal individuals were diagnosed as mentally ill because of their political beliefs.

Human Rights Watch said that it is "not unusual" for institutionalized children in Russia to be controlled, even disciplined with powerful drugs, such as lime aminazine and Phenobarbital_drugs, medical experts say can damage the brains and bodies of young children.

A Parallel to Soviet Political Psychiatry:

Compare this to the "treatment" of political dissidents who, while not running away from institutions, were told that they had a severe case of "inflexibility of convictions" or "nervous exhaustion brought on by [their] search for justice" and that this was camouflaged by "normal behavior." They were subjected to intravenous injections of psychotropic drugs that were so painfully administered, some patients passed out.13

Largely because of this, over a seven decade period an estimated 40 million people were sent to the "gulag"_the vast network of "special" psychiatric hospitals, labor camps and prisons.¹⁴

Deaths:

The fact that today children die unnecessarily in Russia's institutions is something that deserves immediate attention. "Death home" is how one Moscow psychiatrist explained the so-called "Psychoneurological Boarding Schools for Mentally Handicapped Children," according to a UNICEF investigation in 1996.¹⁵

Stern magazine reported in March 1999 on the case of Natasha, a girl with Downs-Syndrome who almost died in a Moscow Boarding School for Handicapped Children. "When she was still living in a home for infants, she weighed 17 kilograms. Natasha could walk, she jumped to music and played with her friends, Lidia and Tolik. But the three of them could not speak. 'Not worthy of promotion,' had been the expert committee's verdict. Lidia was transferred to the Boarding school first, then Tolik, then Natasha. Three years later, Natasha's former educator from the infant's home found her in a lying-down ward for children...Her head had been shaved, her arms tied together, her legs were thin as sticks. Natasha, now 9-years-old, only weighed 6.4 kg."¹⁶

For Natasha, there was a happy ending. A parents' group transferred her to a hospital where she could be taken for walks and someone sat by her bed, comforting and feeding her. She gained weight and one month later, "she smiled for the first time."¹⁷

Lidia was not so lucky. She died within a few weeks of being in the Boarding School. Tolik survived only three months. Doctors wrote on his death certificate: "Syndrome of unexpected death."¹⁸ This, too, required investigation for possible medical misconduct: for falsifying death certificates.

A Financial Excuse:

CCHR International representatives were frequently told during their visit that the abuses of children and, indeed, adults, was because of Russia's economic crisis, not abusive practices. However, even under good economic conditions, the abuses existed. As Human Rights Watch representative Kathleen Hunt stated, "There is a financial crisis but what is important is not renovations or expensive new buildings. It does not cost a lot of money to ban violence: wrapping children up in strait jackets, locking them up and maltreating them. The personnel ought to be warned that this will be punished...The Russian Government must punish and prevent abuses."¹⁹

Adult Institutions:

Anyone looking at the conditions in Russia's adult psychiatric institutions could be forgiven if they believed they were witnessing the concentration-camps of Nazi Germany. Naked, near-starved individuals stare at nothing but their own mental nightmare: a nightmare created by the very conditions they have been subjected to.

For example, in Psychiatric Hospital Number 2 in Priosernoje in Central Russia, the patients are hardly fed; they are not given vegetables and never any fruit. This diet, in itself, could create physical deficiencies that then manifest as mental illness. There is no bed linen, no pillows, towels or soap. Here, too, they die.²⁰

In a matter of a few months, 24 out of a total of 300 patients died.²¹

According to Stern, "There is even a scarcity of coffins: recently, the dead have been buried in polyethylene sheets, says a nurse. Sometimes two are buried

in the same grave, which means less work. Wooden boards are placed on the mound_sometimes not even with a name on them, just a number painted on with water color."22

The Italian Example:

Similar conditions existed in Italy until CCHR exposed them. Between 1991 and 1996, CCHR members, accompanied by Members of Parliament, including Senator Edo Ronchi, and the media, conducted unannounced inspections on Italy's long-forgotten psychiatric asylums. Some 17,000 people were found naked, living like animals in locked, filthy rooms. In 1996, as a direct result of CCHR's work, the government ordered that the asylums be closed down and the patients be moved to more humane premises. Already, 7,000 of these patients have now been relocated, with many now learning how to read, write, work and care for themselves for the first time in their lives. Incredibly, 4,100 of the patients were discharged_they had been imprisoned needlessly!

Similar unannounced inspections and review are needed in Russia. With proper medical_not psychiatric_assessment, many of the inmates of psychiatric institutions could be properly medically treated, re-assessed and discharged. They could be trained to care for themselves and to even work in the asylums, to plant vegetables and fruit and renovate the buildings. But first, they need to have medical assessments, their physical ailments addressed, and their self-worth returned to them

Psychiatrists Abusing Patients For Their Own Financial Gain:

At a Moscow press conference on April 14, lawyer Lidia Ryabova told of a psychiatrist who has been under investigation for nearly two years after the psychiatrist convinced an elderly woman to sign over two homes to her. "Within two weeks, the woman was dead. The psychiatrist reportedly obtained a \$3000 expertise from a well known psychiatric institution which the psychiatrist believes exonerates her behavior," Ms. Ryabova stated.23

The psychiatrist, who normally treats teenagers, had maneuvered her way into a position to get access to elderly patients who were wealthy. "I do not want to cast a shadow on all psychiatrists," Ms. Ryabova added, "but we must tell about [these] terrible incidents so that they do not occur again."24

This type of fraudulent practice and the fact that a renowned psychiatric institution provided an "expertise" for the psychiatrist that authorities seemed to have favored in lieu of the family's rights, is a clear indication that some of the former Soviet punitive psychiatric regime still exists.

The Russian Independent Psychiatric Journal, Issue 1, 1999, reported on "the defenselessness of the mentally ill by the criminal ways of depriving them of their apartments." According to interviews also conducted by CCHR International in Moscow, it is a common practice for psychiatrists to manipulate the vulnerable into handing over property rights and other valuables.

"Psychiatrists who have vulnerable patients sign over their property to them should be criminally prosecuted and have their license to practice revoked," Ms. Ryabova said.

In 1997, the Russian Society of Psychiatrists also confirmed in writing that preventive measures were needed for psychiatric abuses, "which happen more often now and have to do with using mentally ill patients for selfish ends."25

In April, 1999, an article in the Moscow media exposed how two psychiatrists, Vadim Chornij and Galina Gerus from Serbskii Institute were investigated for fraud, after requesting \$5000 from a mother whose son was facing trial. An independent government inquiry could investigate the extent of potential fraud in this field. It is extraordinary given the fact that the \$5000 these

psychiatrists were asking for could improve the care of nearly 100 patients for an entire year, or scores more abandoned children in children's homes each year.

Punitive Political Psychiatry_Unresolved:

At the April 14 press conference, Anatoli Prokopenko, renowned Historian-archivist and author of *Insane Psychiatry*, reiterated his position that all medical records from Serbskii Institute's Soviet period along with those from other psychiatric institutions that have been involved in wrongful diagnosis and treatment of political dissidents and/or questionable drug and other medical experiments, be made public. He called for the "medical rehabilitation" of Soviet dissidents and for their citizens' rights to be restored.

In a 1989 Reuters report, Mr. Prokopenko had commented that so called "rehabilitation was replaced by the simple deletion of two million people from the psychiatric rolls."²⁶

According to information obtained from interviews conducted by CCHR International, there are still thousands of dissidents languishing in Russian psychiatric hospitals. Because their original diagnosis and records show a "psychiatric disorder," there is often little, if any, way of proving that they were first incarcerated because of their political views. An updated psychiatric assessment has been called for; however, for many, the damage from so many years of wrongful incarceration in concentration-camp like conditions, suffering from neglect, malnutrition and the long-term side effects of psychotropic drugs, a second diagnosis may well have them furthered defined as psychiatrically-ill.

The problem is that it is now 1999 and human rights advocates are still demanding re-assessment and rehabilitation of political prisoners ten years after the All-Russian Community of Psychiatrists was accepted back into the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) under strict dictates which included, "Victims of abuse shall have their cases reviewed within the U.S.S.R. and also in cooperation with the WPA...The psychiatric registry shall not be used against psychiatric patients."²⁷

It is also now more than a decade since a group of American psychiatrists, lawyers and Federal United States officials were allowed to visit Russian mental hospitals to interview patients believed to be dissidents.²⁸ They reported that 14 of the 27 patients they talked to had no evidence of a mental disorder and in three other cases, their symptoms were so mild that they would not warrant involuntary hospitalization in Western countries.²⁹

Yet Dr. Georgi Morozov, a leader in Soviet psychiatry and head of the Serbskii Institute for 30 years, claimed that the delegation concluded "diagnostic differences" only in the patients that they saw. According to *The Psychiatric Times*, Dr. Morozov's comments were a "half-truth at best."³⁰ Dr. Morozov also said that the American psychiatrists found no evidence of political abuse but in fact, they found otherwise. The author of the article says that Dr. Morozov, himself, had participated in "political examinations."³¹

Dr. Morozov retired as Serbskii's director in 1990 and was succeeded by Professor Nikolai Zharikov who also denied that psychiatry was purposely and consciously abused for political ends, yet he, too, personally participated in those abuses.³² Then in 1995, Ms. Tatiana Dmitrieva, Health Minister and a former director of Serbskii, blocked the President's commission established to delve into the fate of political prisoners and reportedly justified this by saying, "After all, [they were] mostly people with psychological disorders at different levels."³³

Dr. Yuri Savenko, president of the Independent Psychiatric Association, was reported in *The Washington Post* as saying that "The leaders of the [psychiatric] profession are virtually the same people as those who misused psychiatry for political purposes in the '60's and '70's."³⁴

As of 1998, allegations persisted that the majority of these psychiatrists rely on the "medical model" for treating patients, which includes the use of electroshock and harmful psychotropic substances, including LSD. "Mentally ill" women are reportedly "aggressively sterilized." (This, at a time when both the Swedish and Canadian governments last year decided to compensate sterilization victims.) There have also been allegations of Russian women being used for psychotropic drug experiments in one psychiatric facility in the Nizhni Novgorod region.

One of the recommendations to address this is for psychiatrists and other mental health practitioners to sign an Oath for Mental Practice. While psychiatric codes of ethics are a step in the right direction, these are not legally binding documents. As such, it is proposed that an Oath for Mental Practice be signed by psychiatrists, psychologists and psychotherapists before being allowed to practice. See Appendix 2.

Dr. Sergei Zapoulskalov a psychiatrist of more than 17 years made international history on April 18, 1999, when he signed this oath to patients promising not to treat them for political reasons, and refusing to use methods that could harm their health or impede their liberty.

Dr. Zapoulskalov stated, "In a country that has been condemned for its appalling psychiatric human rights record, especially the use of punitive political methods, it is appropriate that Russia lead the way with positive reforms. Not only are patients protected by this Oath but also doctors who support humanitarian and competent medical care. While I recently gave up practicing psychiatry, I fully support this Oath which could have prevented some of the abuses of the past."

Psychiatric Drug Use:

Dr. Zapoulskalov says Russian children are being given powerful mind-altering psychiatric drugs, such as the tranquilizer, haloperidol. "Today in Russia, children who have difficulties with studying, are not given into the care of parents or teachers, but into psychologists hands. From there they go to psychiatrists, who cannot offer anything better than psychotropic drugs. I have never seen a teenager that they helped. But I know of a great number of incidents when such drugs have led to dependence and depression which has ended in suicide."³⁵

Dr. Zapoulskalov, an advisor to CCHRs International and Russia helped CCHR release its booklet, *Harming Lives: Psychiatry_Betraying and Drugging Children*, which is a public warning against Western psychiatric methods, especially its tests, diagnoses and drugs being introduced to Russia.

Already, he noted, the newer antidepressants have been introduced here. "It has also been reported to me," he said, "that school psychologists have referred children who misbehave to therapy that can include 'medication,' which, essentially, is a drug because it alters the mind. In countries around the world, these drugs and other psychiatric methods in schools have destroyed once great and workable education systems and ruined children's lives. We can't let this happen in Russia.

"We have a high literacy level which we need to protect and we already have an escalating illegal drug abuse problem among adolescents. Widespread psychiatric drug prescribing could add to this because some of these "medications" are addictive.

According to the Human Rights Watch Report, psychiatric drugs used on children in Russia include, Aminazine, Tizercine, Relanium, Haloperidol, Neuleptil, Nazepam and Rudotel.

It is not surprising then that with hundreds of thousands of children incarcerated in over-crowded children's homes, and with the use of powerful mind-altering drugs, that 5,000 children end up in Russian courts each year, a further 3,000 become street children, and 1,500 commit suicide.³⁶

Consider that one of these drugs, haloperidol, can frequently cause difficulty in thinking, poor concentration, nightmares, emotional dullness, depression, despair and sexual dysfunction. Physically, it and other major tranquilizers can cause Tardive Dyskinesia_sudden, uncontrollable, painful muscle cramps and spasms, writhing, squirming, twisting and grimacing movements, especially of the legs, face, mouth and tongue, drawing the face into a hideous scowl. They can also induce Akathisia, a severe restlessness that studies show can cause agitation and psychosis.³⁷ A potentially fatal effect is "Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome," which includes muscle rigidity, altered mental states, irregular pulse or blood pressure and cardiac problems.³⁸

Prozac, one of the newer antidepressants introduced to Russia, has a controversial history. Between 1988 and 1992, there were 90 American children and adolescents who had suffered suicidal or violent self-destructive behavior while on the drug. The American Food and Drug Administration's own adverse drug reaction reports reveal that a 12-year-old suffered hostility and confusion, was violent and became "glassy-eyed" on the drug; an 18-year-old was hospitalized after being on the drug for 270 days and had reportedly sexually assaulted and stabbed a store clerk; one 16-year-old who had been on the drug for 50 days reported hostility, psychotic depression and hallucinations when there had been no prior psychiatric history.³⁹

A December 1996 French study entitled, "Suicide and psychotropic drugs," established that "suicide attempts are more frequent among patients taking antidepressants (1.7 percent of the cases) than among patients receiving placebo (0.8 percent)."⁴⁰

A November 1997 medical report found: "The association between benzodiazepine use and attempted suicide is especially high for...the young, and for males...."⁴¹ In the April 1996 Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, a study found that "the older tricyclic antidepressants are a significant cause of suicide" and accounted for the majority of antidepressant deaths studied between 1986 and 1990.⁴²

In Denmark, with a high usage of psychotropic drugs, the suicide rate is twice the rate of that in the United States.⁴³ Every fourth death among young people ages 15 to 29 is caused by suicide.⁴⁴

In response to CCHR's booklet, a Moscow teacher and engineer wrote on April 17, "The information and ideas from this booklet are necessary and timely, especially in Russia." He comments that psychiatrists have a "materialistic view on all things" and "Psychiatry: Betraying and Drugging Children convinces again that psychiatrists must not be allowed to come close to our education system. God forbid that in Russia their influence will become similar."⁴⁵

More on Wrongful Diagnosis:

According to Federal law, a psychiatric diagnosis cannot be made based only on the individual's disagreement with the moral, cultural, political or religious values. Yet clearly, there is an abuse of this and, in particular, by the same psychiatrists who, during the Soviet era were responsible for wrongful diagnosis of political dissidents. This includes Feodore Kondratiev who diagnoses people with different religious views to orthodox religion as mentally defective_a destructive and self-serving diagnosis and one that if acted upon by governments, could be unconstitutional.

CCHR International is conducting a more in depth investigation into this and will report its findings at a later date.

Solutions:

CCHR is not just about exposing the problem. Through the elimination of physically harmful practices and involuntary incarceration and treatment, it is our hope that mental healing can be delivered in a calm atmosphere characterized by tolerance, safety, security and respect for people's rights. To that end, in 1982, CCHR successfully campaigned for Bill 929 in California which established a special pilot project to provide medical evaluation of people in psychiatric hospitals. CCHR was represented on the advisory committee established to oversee the pilot.

In 1989 the findings, published in Archives of General Psychiatry, found that 39 percent of the more than 500 patients studied have an active, important physical disease; of these, only about half are recognized by the mental health workers.⁴⁶ The study concluded, "Many serious illnesses were unknown to the mental health system but were known to the patient or discovered by the screening procedure."⁴⁷

As such, we strongly recommend that physical examinations are done of all patients and children to determine what underlying, undiagnosed medical conditions patients might have and to correct any medical problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Quite aside from the financial problems of housing and feeding patients and paying for staff to care for them, there is a culture of neglect, violence and abuse of the mentally ill which has existed in the mental health field for decades.

According to Prof. Prokopenko, "hundreds of thousands of people" were "deprived of their honor, work, family and place of living" and were "deprived of their rights without cause" during the Soviet punitive-political psychiatry regime. Human rights observers have said that "the naming and prosecution of psychiatrists guilty of deliberate false diagnoses and malpractice, and the allowing of patients to be examined by doctors of their choice" was necessary.⁴⁸

Yet this is not being carried out.

In view of the fact that the Russian government is attempting to improve human rights with the establishment of human rights agencies, CCHR would like to make some suggestions that might help the government to restore human rights to the field of mental health. These recommendations are made on the basis of 30-years experience and the many reforms CCHR has helped obtain in countries across the globe.

We recommend that:

{ A patient's complaints system be established similar to that established in Australia called the Health Rights Complaints Commission (New South Wales). An agency, independent of the Health Ministry and Ministry of Labor and Social Development, such as an Ombudsman, should be able to receive and investigate complaints by patients about psychiatric malpractice and abuse, reconcile this and prosecute on behalf of the patient where necessary.

{ The government ensure that harmful psychiatric drugs are not introduced into schools as a method of addressing educational problems of Russian children.

{ The government offer an amnesty to former Soviet psychiatrists who publicly admit to their wrongful diagnosing and/or harmful treatment of political dissidents, and who show that they have nothing left to hide and take responsibility for this punitive-political psychiatric era.

{ As part of the amnesty, Serbskii Institute and any other former political-psychiatric institutions or medical research foundations should release their records to the public so that Russia can know the full extent of the abuse that was committed.

{ An independent government inquiry should investigate the extent of potential fraud by Serbskii Institute psychiatrists following recent criminal charges laid against several psychiatrists.

{ Former Soviet dissidents wrongfully incarcerated in psychiatric institutions should have all records pertaining to their false diagnosis erased and they should be compensated and their citizens rights restored.

{ Financial hardship should not be used as an excuse for inhumane treatment in psychiatric institutions as has been recently exposed in Stern magazine. The same conditions exist in other countries such as Greece and Italy but after exposure to the government, they were corrected. A review of the funding of these institutions should be made to ensure that the majority of funds go to patient care, maintenance of the buildings and that humanitarian staff are employed and paid.

{ As hospital workers who speak out about abuses have been punished or threatened with dismissal, a law should be introduced to protect and reward hospital nurses and staff who report on fraudulent or harmful practices with the honest intention of getting these corrected and/or having those responsible for the harm made accountable.

{ As the Psychological-Medical-Pedagogical Commission has resisted handing over the clinical standards it uses to diagnose children as imbeciles and ineducable, these documents should be made public. We endorse the Human Rights Watch recommendations: The Russian government should begin a process of gradually closing the psychoneurological internaty in favor of alternative models such as family sized foster care and adoption, and

{ The Committee for the Prevention of Torture should investigate conditions in Russian institutions for Russian orphans. Various forms of inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment should be investigated, including excessive use of isolation, restraints, sedatives, and psychiatric hospital stays for children who attempt to run away from the orphanage.

{ It should be made illegal for any psychiatrist, psychologist or psychotherapist to influence a patient to sign a will leaving property and/or funds of any kind to the treating practitioner, with criminal penalties for violation of this.

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) was established in 1969 to investigate and expose psychiatric violations of human rights and to clean up the field of mental healing. At that time, the victims of psychiatry were a forgotten minority group, warehoused under dreadful, often terrifying, conditions in institutions around the world.

CCHR is now an international organization with more than 129 chapters in 30 countries [now more than 250 chapters in 34 countries]. In the course of CCHR's 37-year history, it has researched psychiatric abuses in many forms all over the world including, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, France, South Africa, Mexico, Spain, and Russia.

The Commission, which was established by the Church of Scientology to investigate and expose psychiatric violations of human rights, includes doctors and other medical specialists, artists, lawyers, educators, and civil and human rights representatives who advise and assist in their professional capacity. However, CCHR does not provide medical or legal advice but recommends that

persons who feel they suffer from adverse reactions from psychiatric treatments seek competent medical examinations by non-psychiatric medical specialists.

In 1986, a report by a Special Rapporteur to the United Nations Human Rights Commission on "The Principles, Guidelines and Guarantees for the Protection of Persons Detained on Grounds of Mental Ill-Health or Suffering from Mental Disorders," stated: "The main task of CCHR has been to achieve reform in the field of mental health and the preservation of rights of individuals under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"CCHR has been responsible for many great reforms. At least 30 bills [now more than 100] throughout the world, which would otherwise have inhibited the rights of patients, or would have given psychiatry the power to commit minority groups and individuals against their will, have been defeated by CCHR actions."

Since 1969, CCHR's work has helped save the lives of millions and prevented needless suffering for millions more around the world.

As Hungarian born Professor of Psychiatry, Thomas Szasz, stated, "We should honor CCHR because it is really the organization that for the first time in human history has organized a politically, socially, internationally significant voice to combat psychiatry. This has never happened in human history before."

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