



AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY

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Committee on the International Freedom of Scientists (CIFS)

CIFS 2002 8 February 2002

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Dear Chairman Lebedev:

I write to you as Chair of the Committee on the International Freedom of Scientists (CIFS) of the American Physical Society (APS). With over 42,000 members, the APS is the largest organization of physicists in the United States. CIFS monitors the rights of scientists worldwide and advocates on behalf of those requiring assistance.

For more than two years, CIFS has closely followed the case of Dr. Igor Sutyagin, a researcher who has been imprisoned in a Kaluga jail on charges of espionage and high treason related to research he conducted for a London-based company. CIFS is saddened by the fact that after the end his trial in December 2001, Dr. Sutyagin, who was not found guilty, remains in jail. This committee has written to Russian authorities over the past two years to express its concern regarding Dr. Sutyagin's situation. Due to the serious nature of the charges and the reported lack of evidence to support the allegations, CIFS has attempted to verify the facts with Russian authorities. In particular, we requested clarification regarding the lengthy incarceration of Dr. Sutyagin.

It has been reported by reliable sources in the press, respected colleagues of Dr. Sutyagin, his lawyers as well as Dr. Sutyagin himself, that he never had access to or possession of any classified materials and, thus, could not have committed espionage. A search of Dr. Sutyagin's home in October 1999, a subsequent year-long investigation conducted by the Federal Security Service (FSB) and a trial that ended this past December, apparently turned up no evidence that Dr. Sutyagin possessed or used classified documents. He has always maintained that he only used publicly available material for this research. Intelligence experts at Dr. Sutyagin's trial reportedly claimed that his research must have been conducted using classified sources due to the accuracy of his research. However, these experts are said to have been unable to identify these sources or the portions of the research that were supposedly classified, and as a result, the Kaluga court struck their testimony.

According to many press reports, the court admitted that FSB investigators committed "significant violations" of legal procedures and violated Dr. Sutyagin's rights in the process. In August of 2001, CIFS, along with the Committee of Concerned Scientists, the New York Academy of Sciences' Committee on Human Rights, and the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, wrote to Russian authorities to express concern for Dr. Sutyagin's rights (see enclosed). No response has ever been received to this or previous correspondence.

What we find unconscionable is that if the court, in fact, stated that FSB investigators violated legal procedures and that Igor Sutyagin's rights were violated, that he continues to be held in prison. In the hope that our concerns have become apparent, I look forward to your explanation for his continued incarceration.

Sincerely,

Noemie Koller, Chair