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May 13, 1996

Ms. D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk
City of Cambridge
City Hall
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Ms. Drury:

I want to express to you and to all the members of the Cambridge City Council how I touched I was to receive a copy of the Council's resolution in honor of my recent biography of the Soviet writer and journalist Ilya Ehrenburg.

I worked on the book for thirteen years, beginning with a trip to Moscow in April of 1982, to interview his daughter Irina Ilinichna Ehrenburg. Leonid Brezhnev was still in power; many people were reluctant to see me or speak candidly with me. The archives were closed to most scholars and it was unthinkable that I could just enter the Lenin Library in central Moscow and ask for assistance. But by the fall of 1990, once Gorbachev's reforms had begun to take hold, I was able to work for a full month in the Central Government Archive of Literature and Art, where the bulk of Ehrenburg's papers are stored. The staff of the Lenin Library was consistently generous with their time and attention as well, helping me to locate newspapers and journals that for many years the regime kept from public view in specially closed archives. The combination of personal interviews with more than a hundred people and access to a great deal of documentary material made it possible to construct the kind of detailed and nuanced portrait that a figure like Ilya Ehrenburg deserves.

Once again, please be sure to convey my sincere gratitude to all the members of the City Council for their thoughtful attention to my efforts.

Yours truly,

Joshua Rubenstein

Joshua Rubenstein

Consent Communication #12

S-305

Communication was received from Joshua Rubenstein, transmitting appreciation for the resolution adopted by the City Council in honor of his recent biography of the Soviet writer and journalist Ilya Ehrenburg.

In City Council June 3, 1996

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