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Associated Press

Katherine Voronaeff, 73, at left, is shown as she was greeted by her daughter, Mrs. Daniel Wills, of Cleveland, as she arrived in Indianapolis by plane after a flight from Russia. Mrs. Voronaeff, who had not seen her family in 24 years, was granted a visa by Soviets to come to the United States.

Siberia Camp Survivor Reunited With Family

By Robert H. Johnson

INDIANAPOLIS, July 9 (AP)—Old and dressed like a peasant, erect and smiling like a queen, Katherine Voronaeff returned to her family.

Flanked by two sons, she stepped off an airliner last night into the arms of other children and grandchildren.

"I am so glad . . . so glad," she repeated softly as daughters-in-law and granddaughter she had never seen stepped up to embrace her.

Not since 1936 had Mrs. Voronaeff, 73, seen her children.

That was the year the Communists banished her to Siberia, because she was the wife of a minister. Her husband, John, a priest of the Russian Evangelical Christian Church, had been sent to Siberia four years earlier. She believes he is still alive.

In 1937, her children escaped to America, where they had lived, and where three of them were born, while their father was a minister in Russian churches.

Her eldest son, Paul, now 48, who changed his name to Vernon, came to Indianapolis. Her other sons, Alexander, 46, of Westchester, Calif.; Timothy, 32, of Minneapolis; John of Pasadena, Calif., and Peter of Willoughby, Ohio, retained the family name. Her daughter, Hope, 38, became Mrs. Daniel Wills of Cleveland.

Two years ago the children learned their mother was alive in Odessa. With the help of the State Department and their Congressmen they finally obtained a visa for her.

Paul and Alexander met her in New York and flew here with her.

All the children were with her last night except Timothy and John. They will arrive in time for a reunion at Paul's home Sunday.

Alexander said Russian officials tried to persuade his mother not to leave, even after she had her visa.

"They told me the Americans would poison her," he said. "She was so scared she didn't eat anything on the plane to New York."