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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Attached Paper on Soviet Youth

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One afternoon, the summer before last, I was at a friend's place in Leningrad looking at some paintings. My friend had set up a private exhibition for several young Leningrad painters and had crowded the walls of his one-room apartment with a large number of intriguing canvases that ranged in style from passee cubism to the latest extravagances of non-objective art. We had been talking about painting, mainly about how it was now quite risky to run such private exhibitions as his because the previous year a couple of them had been raided by the authorities, when the conversation turned to writing. Boris began to talk about a young writer he had recently discovered whose stories delighted him. This young man, who was a mere 17 or 18, was writing stories with a tragic cast about the problems of old age, and, according to Boris, he revealed an astonishing insight for a person so young into the psychology of old people. But this wasn't what particularly delighted Boris about the stories. What delighted him about them was that they were written in an easily understandable, straightforwardly realistic prose style, and were refreshingly free of the involuted complexities of the avante-garde literary experimentation that, Boris complained, so many of the manuscripts of the young Russian writers he had been reading exhibited.

What could be more deliciously ironic? Here I was in Leningrad, in a country where Socialist Realism is the literary law of the land and where any manifestation by writers of an interest in formal literary experimentation continues to be officially denounced as "bourgeois decadence"; and here was Boris, starving amidst a governmentally decreed abundance of realistic prose for the plain communication of words without ulterior meanings and plots and characters with some recognizable relation to life. Of course, Boris' reading was very specialized. He had been reading his friends; and if they wrote in a decisively experimental or formalistic vein it was only because they wrote for people like Boris, and not for publication. I, myself was never able to determine how extensive this kind of writing is among young Russians. When he was in America not very long ago, Evgenii Evtushenko told me that writers who privately experiment with non-realistic prose styles are the exception in the Soviet Union rather than the rule. But judging by Boris' predicament, he had somehow managed to surround himself with a considerable number of these exceptions.

I have not recalled this incident here because of the amusing irony it contains in itself, but rather because it is illustrative of a larger irony connected with Soviet appearances and Soviet reality in general. How many of us who know Russia well have not run into a stubborn show of disbelief when describing to our countrymen the relative imperviousness of intelligent Russians to official propaganda, their political open-mindedness, or their critical attitudes toward their government? There is a settled conviction in the West,

nurtured by such thinkers as George Orwell, by the superficial accounts of Russian life of various Moscow correspondents, and by the hasty impressions of Western visitors to the Soviet Union, that the Russian people are in the mass like-minded copies of their leaders. To take a typical example, Max Frankel, who summed up several years of duty in Moscow with a series of articles on the Soviet Union in The New York Times, tells us that Russians not only lack freedom, they also "lack an appreciation of the meaning of personal freedom." Russians have lived so long without freedom, Mr. Frankel implied, that they have lost the awareness of what it is. Or take the case of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who the year before last returned from the Soviet Union, where he went as a member of an American writers' delegation, and wrote an account of his experiences in Encounter magazine. Mr. Schlesinger was shrewd enough to realize that he had to discount as mere parroting of the official line much of what he heard from Russian writers during delegation discussions. And when he writes of his dominant impression of the Soviet Union -- that it is a "theological" society, certain of the infallibility of its leaders, its ideology and its victorious historical destiny -- he is careful to limit the relevance of this characterization to the official Soviet intellectual atmosphere he was exposed to. Nevertheless, he somehow allowed himself to be taken in by the official ideological din, and he expanded his characterization of official Soviet society to cover the Soviet intellectual elite, which he described as displaying the faith, dogmatism, narrow-mindedness and stereotyped thinking appropriate to the leading members of such a religious community as he perceived the Soviet Union to be.

But I don't want to appear clever at Mr. Frankel's and Mr. Schlesinger's expense by reaping the easy benefits of hindsight. I willingly admit that it took me a year of living in unrestricted and intimate contacts with Russians to shed my own inclinations toward similar beliefs.

I went to the Soviet Union with the idea that I would be living among a different breed of people who would be separated from me intellectually by all the crooked ways of Soviet dialectical logic, and with whom I would find it difficult, if not impossible, to communicate. I knew, of course, there would be exceptions. But, after all, last November marked the forty-third anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, and for all those forty-three years the Russian people have been subjected to the most steady, highly saturated and insidiously varied propaganda yet devised by governments. It was only natural to expect that all those years of propaganda had had their effect, and that on political issues the common attitudes of Russians would be sharply opposed to the attitudes of people with access to objective information. But my biggest surprise in the Soviet Union was to find that this "Orwellian gap" which I had expected to separate me from Russians, does not exist at all as far as intelligent Russian opinion is concerned.

Of course, there were many people who for various reasons -- youthful naivete, stupidity, lack of education, or vested interests -- exhibited all the qualities of mindlessness and stereotyped thinking that Soviet indoctrination aims to inculcate. However, what was astonishing to find was that so often, no matter whom I talked to -- taxi drivers, students, scholars, or just plain people met by chance on the street or in a restaurant -- that these people and I did share basic values with reference to which we evaluated Soviet life in the same way. There was no basic disagreement between us; none of the blank incomprehension of people who inhabit a different world of moral and social values that I had expected to encounter in discussions with Russians on such topics as freedom of the press, for example, or the prohibition of information from the West, or, again, the lack of genuine democratic political institutions in the Soviet Union.

I had gone to the Soviet Union armed with moral indignation, but I soon had to lay down my arms. I soon found myself ceasing to tell Russians what a nasty place it was they lived in. They knew better than I that they were unfree, that they were miserably poor, perhaps needlessly so, that their leaders lied to them, distorted facts and concealed information from them. I could sum up my experience in the Soviet Union with respect to this question by saying that almost all of my dialogues with Russians illustrated the simple maxim that "he who wears the shoe knows best where it pinches."

Now it is always odd when two or more observers come to diametrically opposed conclusions on the basis of presumably similar experiences. And if what I am about to write is to be at all credible, I think I must attempt to give some answer to the question of how it happened that Mr. Frankel and Mr. Schlesinger on the one side, and myself on the other, did come to opposite conclusions.

The case of Mr. Frankel is simple enough. There is no more dangerous man for a Soviet Russian than a Western journalist and he is the last person in the world a Russian would be inclined to be frank with. During the whole of my year at Leningrad University I knew of only one student who was expelled from the university for political reasons. This young man had succeeded in establishing for himself a reputation as a non-conformist and oppositionist. He was one of the very few young people I met in Leningrad who was genuinely interested in religion, and he made no secret of it. He read English well, and because he had reached a point of despair not uncommon among Russians that drives them to court disaster rather than put up any longer with lying and subterfuge, he conspicuously displayed whatever unorthodox English reading matter he could lay his hands on. He was one of the outstanding students at the Economics Faculty and he was writing a study of the American economy in which he came to conclusions offensive to the orthodoxies of Marxism-Leninism: his faculty advisor used to tell him how much better off he would be if

he would only make up his mind to "be with us, instead of against us." The authorities didn't like any of these things about this young man, but no measures were taken against him and he was permitted to go on studying. Then, in the Spring of 1960, he made a trip to Moscow where he somehow managed to get himself interviewed by an American reporter from a mid-Western newspaper. The interview, identifying him and describing some critical remarks he made of the Soviet Union was published in America, came to the attention of the Soviet authorities, and caused his expulsion from the university.

The Soviet authorities are not as impatient with open criticism (as long as it is unorganized) as is often thought, but expressing it to a foreigner, especially to a foreign journalist, is a form of attack they will not tolerate. This to them is tantamount to betrayal to the enemy; it has almost the weight of treason in their eyes. This, incidentally, is the reason why most Soviet tourists abroad are even more guarded and rigid with foreigners than they are at home.

Mr. Schlesinger's impressions were gathered mainly from official delegation discussions. These are not, to say the least, exactly the circumstances in which one can expect to have frank discussions with Russians. One soon learns in the Soviet Union that a few elementary rules have to be observed in order to know Russians honestly. The first is never to expect a Russian to speak candidly with you in the presence of other Russians, unless they are his trusted friends. The second rule is never to expect a Russian who is talking to you in an official capacity to risk his job or his freedom (or, sometimes, to betray his trust) by revealing his private self. This must be kept firmly in mind if you have anything to do with Soviet cultural delegations, where both rules are bound to be intensified by the presence of people who are responsible for surveillance over their fellow delegation members and for directing the discussions along "proper lines."

But I do not wish to suggest that no one who spoke to Mr. Schlesinger was honest with him. Many of the literary people one meets in delegation circles are likely to be representatives of the despised Stalin generation -- the careerists, sycophants and intellectual mediocrities who rose to the top of Soviet society when everything that was intelligent, talented and independent-minded in it was swept away by the purges. Some of these people actually do possess the qualities of mind Mr. Schlesinger attributes to the Soviet intellectual elite; and, yet, even among them, if they are genuine intellectuals and not mere party bureaucrats, the rule is cynicism rather than stupidity, and what they say cannot be taken as evidence for what they believe. As for the other writers and intellectuals Mr. Schlesinger may have talked to -- those who deserve the name "elite" not because they are highly placed in intellectual society, but because they are the advanced minds of the Soviet intelligentsia --

we can be sure that if they impressed him the way they apparently did, it was because they were being less than candid with him. Mr. Schlesinger suspected that the very men "who seem rigid and impervious when foreigners voice doubts are actually voicing the same doubts themselves in private." He was right. And yet he did use his conversations with them as the basis for defining the state of mind of the Soviet intellectual elite as "theological."

I suppose that after having talked for several weeks with human beings there is a psychological compulsion to believe that you have been in touch with realities and not in some schizophrenic never-never land where everyone says one thing but thinks another, so that in the end you are left unable to make any judgments at all based on what people have said to you. However, it is a wicked fact, but nevertheless, a fact, that whatever genuine intellectual life there is in the Soviet Union exists under the surface, and that Russians, when they feel they have to, can lie (not only to foreigners, unfortunately, but also to one another) with the flawless skill that a people gains from having lived under conditions of political oppression for as many years as they have.

To this day I am troubled by the memory of a conversation I had with a young philosophy teacher at Moscow University. I had only just arrived in the Soviet Union. It was early October, and colder than I remembered any October to have been back home. I had been given only one blanket for my bed and was making inquiries about getting another when a very intelligent looking young man, who, as it turned out roomed just down the hall from me, offered to lend me an extra blanket he said he had and invited me to his room. It was the first time I had been completely alone with a Soviet Russian. Here was my opportunity to find out what "made the Russians tick." Just as soon as I could, after we had gotten over the polite formalities of making each other's acquaintance, I began to raise the questions I had been storing up for just such a moment. My friend, I soon found out, was not only a patriot, he was a super-patriot; he seemed thoroughly imbued with the faith, and delighted by this unexpected chance to proselytize it to one of the uninitiated. I was impressed by the passionate conviction with which he extolled the virtues of the Soviet system, proclaiming it to be the freest and most democratic in the world; and equally impressed by the sincere show of warmth with which he pitied me for having to live in the world of capitalism, exploitation and intellectual toadyism. I confronted him with an account of Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th Congress, trying to describe as vividly as I could some of the ghastly crimes Khrushchev accused Stalin of. How could his faith remain intact, I asked, in the face of the knowledge that such things had happened in his country? His answer was simple, quite faithful to the then current line, and quite insane. Stalin, he said, could not be blamed for the "mistakes" that took place during his reign; this as everybody knew, was the fault of Beria, who, as

everybody knows, was a capitalist agent and saboteur. These were my first days in the Soviet Union and I was not surprised or disappointed by this man's response. I was face to face with that political madness, the Orwellian double-think, that I had expected to encounter. Was it possible that this man, by all normal signs intelligent and rational, actually believed this mad medieval tale of Stalin seduced by the Mephistophelean wiles of an evil Iago? I had no reason to think he didn't. I could not detect the slightest shiftiness in his eyes, the faintest movement of his facial muscles, by which one supposes people to betray insincerity. And yet, I am now convinced he was lying.

During the succeeding months of my stay in the Soviet Union, after I had had so much experience with people who were capable of thinking independently and critically that I almost began to cease to believe that there were any indoctrinated true believers in the Soviet Union, I continued to be disturbed by the memory of that young man at Moscow University. I spoke to Russian friends about him, told them that I was convinced he actually believed in the Beria story and all of the other fantastic, distorted official accounts of history. But my friends were unmoved; their verdict was unanimous: If he was intelligent, he could not possibly have believed the nonsense he told me. And now I am sure my Russian friends were right. This man had been lying to me, and doing a perfect job of it, because he did not trust me and was afraid to reveal his actual views.

If there is anything nightmarish and diabolical about the Soviet Union it is not that the government has succeeded in some Orwellian way in twisting peoples minds; it is that the government has succeeded in compelling people to pretend that their minds have been twisted into official molds, and, moreover, to pretend with a mastery that creates a perfect illusion of reality.

I am convinced that it takes a Russian-speaking foreigner at least several months to find the road to fruitful and frank discussions in the Soviet Union. It takes at least that long to learn to distinguish between those people who for various reasons are going to give you carbon-copy statements of the current official line, from those who will speak truthfully. In one's own country a man's quality is in most cases an open book. We can detect almost instinctively by how our countrymen talk or look if they are stupid or insincere, that is, worth talking to. But on foreign soil it takes time to acquire the tact necessary to define a man's quality on the basis of a few meetings. For a foreigner in the Soviet Union the road to a fruitful exchange of ideas lies in the several months of education by which he learns to separate the people who from fear, venality, or stupidity cannot be counted on to depart one whit from official ideology, from those who can be talked to in an honest, human way.

I have given all this attention to the question of whether or not the Soviet mind is a "captive mind" because I think it is of primary importance for me to try at the outset to establish certain general characteristics of Radio Liberty's listening audience before taking up a description of that single segment of it -- Soviet youth -- that I have been asked to write about. On the basis of my experiences in the Soviet Union I would suggest that the first assumption Radio Liberty should make is that its audience does not have to be cleansed of pernicious indoctrination and won over to a new point of view. The people who listen to Radio Liberty should be, if nothing is done to alienate them, a friendly audience. They share the varying degrees of dissatisfaction with their government that is characteristic of thinking Russians.

What are the grounds for this dissatisfaction? First of all, they are economic. Despite considerable, and in certain areas, dramatic improvements under Khrushchev in material conditions, life continues to be extremely poor by Western standards, and Russians know it and continually complain about it. Housing is appallingly crowded, consumer goods of all kinds are in short supply, and even entertainment facilities like movies, restaurants, cafes or informal local "hangouts" are scarce relative to the need for them. Young people, obviously, are especially sensitive to the lack of adequate entertainment facilities. And crowded housing is an irritant to them on several counts. First of all, it frustrates their desire for privacy, both before and after marriage. It is easy to understand that it is no pleasure under any conditions to have to live with one's family after you have reached the age when you want to live alone, just as it is easy to understand that living with in-laws after marriage presents unpleasant problems. But in the Soviet Union there are certain disadvantages connected with crowded housing that are not so obvious to us from our own experiences and have more to do with political considerations than with personal ones. There are nosy, narrow-minded neighbors who regard themselves as the guardians of public morality in any country. In most places they are a nuisance which can more or less be avoided. But in the Soviet Union, where the rule is communal apartment living, with four to five families sharing a single apartment, these neighbors are a positive menace living right under your very nose. It is not that the political police has its spies planted in every house, as is sometimes imagined in the West. It is just that when people of mixed social backgrounds are thrown together there is bound to be friction, and bound to be one among them who is a gossip, or ambitious for official favor, or a heresy-hunting patriot who would not hesitate to cause trouble for an unorthodox neighbor. As a foreigner, my experience of the constraints communal apartment living put upon my friends was very vivid indeed. For one of the taboos of Soviet society is association with foreigners and by personally participating in the various precautions my friends had to take when I visited them at home I was better able to imagine the many other ways they had to restrain their behavior so as to avoid setting loose the wagging tongues of neighbors.

Another way in which the housing problem affects particularly the young is the cramp it puts upon their social life. The typical young urban Russian not only has no place where he can be alone; he also has no place where he can entertain his friends. As a consequence urban youths spend a lot of their free time outside of their homes. But this is also not without its annoying problems. For where are they to go, and what are they to do for casual entertainment outside their homes? In a city like Leningrad, with a population in the millions, there are some 8 or 9 "first-class" restaurants where young people may congregate, plus a dozen or two cafes, all of which, by the way, close no later than midnight on weekdays and 1:00 a.m. on Saturdays. The reason, it was explained to me, why Soviet cities black out so uncommonly early is because the Soviet Union is a working nation, whose people have to get up early for their jobs. The cafes, but not the restaurants, display little signs on their walls ranging in expression from the mildly "We Don't Smoke Here" to the imperious "Smoking Strictly Forbidden." No one knows why the signs are there. Some ascetic types defend them by citing sanitary reasons: cigarette smoke is presumably harmful in some way to the digestive processes. But it would be difficult to explain why it is any less harmful in a restaurant than in a cafe. I can't imagine that Ilf and Petrov in their day failed to aim some of their choice satiric barbs at this particular evidence of bureaucratic literal-mindedness and idiocy, but the signs are still there and they continue to stand as a symptom of the joyless, heavy, puritanically work-a-day atmosphere of Soviet life, just as the early closing of restaurants and cafes does. There is not a single coffee house in Leningrad where young people can get together and talk; there are no night clubs; there is a single ice-cream parlor for the whole length Nevsky Prospect: it can always be identified by the long lines that form in front of its doors on summer evenings. Russians are perhaps the most devoted movie-goers in the world, but just because they are, the supply of movie houses lags way behind the demand for them; to see a worthwhile film, and often one that is not so worth-while, you have to make a special advance trip to the box office to buy your ticket. When you consider all of these things together you get some insight into at least one of the reasons why urban Russian youth exhibit a feeling of restlessness and a sense of being hemmed in.

These feelings acquire a peculiar focus in the typical attitudes of young Russians toward America. Whatever else it is they don't know about America, they have somehow learned that it is a land in which the young are especially favored. It is a marvel to them that Americans of university age frequently have their own automobiles and they muse about the mobility and sense of freedom this must give their American coevals; they talk wistfully about "nochnye kluby," and young Russians, like many Russians who are not so young, look back nostalgically to the NEP period when night life had all the qualities of raciness and variety they imagine it to have in America and know it

to be lacking in the Soviet Union. Jazz has struck a peculiarly responsive chord in youth the world over, but I hardly think it would be possible to find young people anywhere else in the world as intense about jazz as many of them are in Soviet Russia. I knew numbers who would have been willing to trade almost anything they owned for an American jazz record; but I remember particularly the pride and excitement with which a young Moscow artist, who earned his living doing caricatures for Komsomol'skaya Pravda, displayed his jazz collection to me. It consisted of some 200 X-ray plates, each of which he had acquired at a price of from 8 to 10 rubles from members of the black market ring, later exposed in the Soviet press, that had succeeded in diverting the X-ray materials from their medical uses and in transcribing American jazz records onto them.

The especial intensity of Russian jazz enthusiasts is, of course, partly the result of their being almost completely deprived of jazz in their society. But deprivation is not the only reason for their boundless enthusiasm. Jazz has for young Russians a unique, symbolic significance entirely apart from anything that it, in itself, communicates to young people elsewhere in the world. Jazz, and the circumstances in which it is listened to in America and Western Europe -- jazz clubs, expresso coffee houses, informal concert halls -- is associated for young Russians with more than their deprivation of a modern musical form; it is associated for them with their deprivation of a whole modern life style that they long for.

To be "modern," to keep abreast of whatever is latest in the West -- this is a lively concern for many Russians, but for typical educated youths it is a ruling passion. The speculators on Moscow's Gorky Street, who will buy the shirt off a Western tourist's back, trade and flourish on this passion. Young Russians, in particular, are offended by their country's continued backwardness and they resent being cut off from new developments in the West. The position that a Westerner often finds himself in as a result of his Russian friends eagerness to be up-to-date is both sad and embarrassing. I was at times the court of final appeal in matters of taste ranging from the cut of a friend's imported East German sport jacket to the prose style of a writer's published short stories, not because I had any pretensions to special competence in these questions, but merely because I was an educated man, born in the West. The point is that the West, in the minds of most educated Russians, has acquired all the idealized attributes of a fairyland. Russians have endowed it more richly than it deserves with those qualities of grace, style and elegance they miss in their own lives and they naturally defer to a Westerner in areas where they feel themselves backward.

The traditional Russian sense of inferiority vis-a-vis the West has been perpetuated and intensified by the decades of isolation imposed upon Russians by the Soviet government. Before going

to the Soviet Union I had always thought that the occasional outbursts in the Soviet press against what is called "adulation for the West" (preklonenie pered zapadom) on the part of certain segments of the youth were just a verbal cover for official anxiety about possible ideological influences from the West. But the extraordinary thing is that "adulation for the West" is real in the Soviet Union, bizarre in its forms, and largely unrelated to ideological considerations. There are Russians who "collect" Westerners, others who boast of their acquaintance, a few who use them as lures to attract female company, and many who pursue them with an ardor that can make a Westerner's life in the Soviet Union a whirlwind of social rounds. I have been bewildered by the antics of intelligent, well-educated acquaintances who selected occasions to speak English within earshot of other Russians so as to be taken for foreigners. Sometimes they carried the game even farther, simply introducing themselves as Englishmen or Americans. It was obvious that they felt that their stock had risen in the eyes of their countrymen. And indeed it had.

The West exercises a potent charm over the imaginations of Russians. To be taken for a Westerner, to have Western acquaintances, to wear Western clothing -- all of these things result in a subtle enhancement of one's person, an addition to one's social prestige, and even, sexual power. The craze for things Western that almost all Russians are seized with has to be understood in this way. The acquaintance who will pester you for months to get him a pair of American blue jeans, the young student who will throw caution to the winds and make repeated trips to your dormitory room to negotiate for a Finnish raincoat, the numerous Russians who will pay double and triple the price they pay for domestic clothing for the various articles of used Western clothing that find their way to Soviet second-hand stores: these people are not so much interested in improving their appearance as they are in possessing themselves of concrete suggestions of contacts with that Western world which they know their friends find so inescapably attractive.

All of the powers of attraction that the Russian acquires by artifice belong to a Westerner by simple right of birth. To be a Westerner, especially an American, in the Soviet Union is to enjoy a unique sense of favor. No Western visitor to the Soviet Union can avoid noticing the extra attentions, large and small, he is accorded, or the stir of excitement he is capable of arousing. But it would be a mistake to try to explain this solely on the basis of the obvious fact that Westerners are rare in the Soviet Union and Russians are eager for knowledge of the West. More important here is the impact that the imagined "glamor" of the West has upon people who are unsatisfied by the extreme unglamorosity of their lives. An odd thing happened to me in the Soviet Union. I suddenly noticed myself turning the young ladies' heads. I had been lucky enough in America

to interest at least one young lady, my wife, but nothing I had ever experienced before had given me reason to believe that I possessed any of the masculine gifts of a potential Don Juan. It disappointed me that Russian girls should be so vulnerable to the charms of the exotic as to bestow special attentions upon a man just because he was a foreigner. My Russian friends were not at all surprised by my predicament. One friend explained the warm interest of Russian females in foreigners by pointing out that they felt oppressed by the dullness and monotony of their life and so looked upon a liaison with a foreigner as a colorful and exciting adventure. Another friend protested against my disappointment with Russian girls: "Why shouldn't they find you interesting and attractive. Look at the way you are dressed and look at the way we are dressed." Somewhere Sally Belfrage, who had lived in the Soviet Union long enough to see the world with Russian eyes, described her sensations upon having entered a Moscow Intourist hotel and seeing there a group of Western Europeans congregated in the lobby: the striking variety of their dress evoked for her the image of a box of Christmas candies brightly sparkling in their varicolored tin foil wrappings.

These are some of the things that are behind the allure of the West for Russians, and it was because we had grown accustomed to exercising it that an American friend and I once were astonished when upon being introduced to a young lady as Americans we received nothing more from her than a distant and correct, "how do you do." It was as if to be an American held no more distinction for her than to have blond hair or brown eyes. She showed none of the sudden animation, gave none of the hints of the eye by which Russians seem to announce upon being introduced to you as an American that you have stepped out of some splendid world to brighten their lives.

Everybody has heard about Great Russian nationalism. The patriotism of the average Russian is genuine, and the readiness and volubility with which even Russian intellectuals express patriotic feelings is rather shocking, almost indecent. At least this is the way it strikes an American intellectual who prides himself on his impartiality and lack of chauvinism and is characteristically squeamish about exposing whatever patriotic feelings he may have lest he be thought of as aggressive, or, God forbid, badly educated and Philistine. Russian nationalism is a major force, with ramifications, I am convinced, that frequently reach into official Soviet international behavior. But although one can very easily get the impression from reading the Soviet press that Russian nationalism is not very different from what German nationalism was under Hitler, that it is an expression of national self-confidence and superiority feelings, this would be a mistaken impression. The strength of the average Russian's feelings of patriotism is for the most part what the psychologists call a "reaction formation" to his feelings of national inferiority. His patriotism is the product of a psychological injury, the legacy of

the centuries during which Russians were, or felt they were, held in contempt by Western Europeans for their cultural and economic backwardness. Russians want to be considered the equals of other Western peoples and they are extremely sensitive to the slightest hint of disdain or condescension. I am not sure that it will take them very far in dealing with the Soviet Union, still it would be well for our government leaders not to discount this element in Khrushchev's personality.

But, as I had said, Russian patriotism is not news to anybody. What I have never seen described is the reverse of Russian patriotism, a definite anti-nationalism that is characteristic of a large segment of the educated youth and is as much a reaction to Russia's continued backwardness as is its opposite. The resentment that many young people feel toward the dull, crude and gross qualities of the tone and texture of Soviet life often takes unfortunate expressions. I noticed in the Soviet Union an antagonism on the part of young people toward the common, uneducated masses that surprised and chagrined me. In the cities the manners and looks of the large peasant populations that inhabit them continue to evoke from the lips of more urbane young Russians the epithets servi and tyemnyi, epithets with which the narod was often characterized in the 19th century. It happened on several occasions with different friends in the theatre that we would be strolling amidst the crowd in the foyer during the between-act intermissions, and my friend would say, encompassing the audience with a disdainful gesture, "Posmotri, kakaya u nas publika!" My friends were offended by the poor dress of the audience, by the unrefined faces of these army officers, government officials, factory workers and visiting provincials who are the new theatre-goers of the Soviet Union. The young people I am now describing, the "Russian haters," as they, themselves, style themselves, blame the shabby stylelessness of Soviet life, everything from the gauche styles of Soviet clothing to the stained, crumb-laden table clothes in Soviet restaurants, upon the low cultural level of the Russian people. They are actually inclined to blame their despotic governmental system on "the people." The Soviet government, they claim, is an authentic expression of the political and cultural immaturity of the Russian people. Their rulers are for the most part half-educated former workers and peasants, and how could one expect anything but simple-minded political intolerance from them. For these young anti-nationalists one of the great problems of Soviet society is that the simple people have indeed inherited the Soviet earth, and have as a result set the tone of Soviet cultural life. I often thought that people who argued this way had given a curious twist to the problem of Mass Society that so much has been written about in the West. The difference is that in the Soviet Union the masses do not impose their tastes upon the minority as they do in the West, commercially, through the operation of a market mechanism, but directly, through the exercise of political power.

Obviously, the people I have been describing constitute a minority among Soviet youth taken as a whole, though my experience tells me that they are not a minority among the educated youth. Their perverse attitude toward their countrymen is an outgrowth of a universal craving for elegance, refinement and style which is a major aspect of the mentality of Russian youth. Life in the Soviet Union is experienced by young people as being particularly uncongenial to them. There are certainly many more reasons than I have described above for the young Russian's sense of the uncongeniality of his society. Some of them are purely political -- the steady harangue of propaganda and indoctrination, the severe demands for intellectual conformity -- and have nothing to do with discontent directed at the style of Soviet life. The result of the inability of young people to find satisfaction for the natural intellectual and aesthetic wants is frustration and boredom as well as a deliberate and unabashed pursuit of the more raw pleasures of life -- sex and drink. It will someday come as a surprise to Westerners who are accustomed to thinking of Soviet sexual mores as rigidly puritanical to learn that they are anything but that. They are, in fact, extremely lax by Western European standards. "Sex," I was told, "is one of the few sweets we have in life," and judging by the astonishingly high incidence of adultery and pre-marital sexual experience in Soviet cities, it is a sweet that is freely indulged in. But apparently the pleasures of promiscuity soon pale for young people and they experience a longing for more stable satisfactions. Marriage appeals to them as a heaven from their boredom and restlessness and as a support against the frustrations of their society. Typically these early marriages turn out to be ill-conceived and end in divorce. Of the two dozen or so young people I knew well enough to have been told about such personal matters, a large majority had been divorced at least once, and some two and three times.

II

I often thought that if the Soviet government had not been so successful in focusing the attention of its citizens on catching up with America there would be a lot less economic discontent in the Soviet Union. Why should Russians insist on comparing themselves with Americans, as they invariably do, and not with other countries in Asia or Africa that have suffered comparable historic disadvantages? I frequently found myself trying to moderate the discontent of friends with their material life, and trying to counter their complaints about the economic misdeeds of their leaders with an injection of historical perspective in which their level of material life might appear in a better light. Why should you be angry that you aren't housed as well or dressed as well as Americans, I asked? Look when you started on the road to industrialization and look when we did. It was a curious role to find myself in and I know I assumed it as much to soften the

humiliation my friends felt as to salve my own conscience: it was embarrassing to be rich while they were so poor. But I gave up this line of argument after one young man replied to it by saying: "Why shouldn't we be as rich as you are, we put up the first sputnik, didn't we?" What this illustrates is that Russians don't have their eyes on America only because their propaganda has directed them there. Like us, they have the Big Nation complex, and they know that they are as rich in material and human resources as America is. And yet my young friend wasn't entirely right. There is still something to be said for historical perspective. But he put aptly into words a widespread Russian attitude: that if their government wasn't investing so much of the country's resources in space and military programs their standard of living would be a good deal higher than it is today.

A preoccupation with economic questions is characteristic of Russians from every walk of life. Your first acquaintance with a Russian usually begins with a standardized routine of questions: What do you do?, he asks, how much do you earn?, does your wife work?, do you own a car?, how many rooms do you have? For many people this is a strange ceremony of self-laceration; they get some kind of bitter pleasure from comparing their unhappy lot with yours, and thereby strengthening their grounds for discontent with their rulers. Others ask these questions so as to mentally set their sights on where they want to go, and where they think their government is actually taking them. In January 1960 I was in Holland for a 3-week visit with my family, and in order to get back to Leningrad I had to go to the Soviet Embassy in the Hague and apply to the first secretary there for an entrance visa. During my previous three months in Leningrad I hadn't had much to do with government officials. But I knew that they ran a nasty society in which people, my own friends, were deprived of political and intellectual freedom, and I didn't expect this to be the pleasantest of interviews. Besides, the participants in our exchange had always been under a cloud of suspicion as far as Soviet officialdom was concerned, and there was always a chance that the Leningrad authorities had decided I was an undesirable character and that I would be denied my return visa. So, all in all, I went to the Soviet Embassy in the Hague somewhat apprehensive, ready to meet the perfect incarnation of the Soviet party bureaucrat, the Enemy and Oppressor, clearly a reliable instrument of Soviet tyranny if he was trusted enough to be allowed to work abroad. The First Secretary's name was Ermilov. He was a short man, on the surface polite, and equally at home in English, Dutch and Russian. After we had seated ourselves in his office and I had explained my business, he made a phone call to find something out about my visa. The party at the other end of the wire said that he would call back in 15 minutes, and so to pass the time Mr. Ermilov engaged me in conversation.... What did I do, he asked, how much did I earn, did my wife work, do I own a car, how many rooms do I have?

No Russian is free of this universal concern with the material questions of life, and even this Russian official, separated as he is from his people by as wide a gulf as separated official Russia from the Russian people in the 19th century, nevertheless shared some of their dreams and hopes. And yet despite this universal concern, the attitudes of young intellectuals toward Russia's economic problems are marked by profound differences from those of older intellectuals, people, say, in their late thirties and older. Typically, the vision of a future in which Russia will be a modern industrialized society with abundance for all is able to evoke in older intellectuals a kind of political seriousness and responsibility and a willingness to tolerate present deprivations for the sake of future goals that it cannot evoke among the intellectual youth. I am speaking now about critically-minded anti-party intellectuals of the older generations: if despite their awareness of the essential evils of the present regime they are willing to subscribe to its programs and moderate their criticisms of it, it is because they have placed economic progress above all else in their scale of social priorities. As far as they are concerned, intellectual and creative freedom as well as the less crucial refinements and graces of life must wait and will, in any case, come of themselves once Russia has reached a high level of material well being. Political maturity and responsibility, they feel, dictate taking first things first, and the first thing for Russia is to move forward economically. The young, on the other hand, are impatient: they want freedom and the material benefits of an industrial society here and now. They are unconsolated by the promises held out by the long view.

I think this characteristic difference between generations is explained by the older generations' livelier sense of recent history and of the sufferings of the Russian people which is its dominant feature. People who are old enough to have fought in the war and to have lived through the horrors of the Stalin era are understandably serious. All of them seem directed in their thoughts toward the future, as if compelled by a need to see something better there so that all the misery that has been the Soviet experience will not have been utterly pointless. The young, however, are uncommitted to a vision of the future. The fact that they live in a world bounded entirely by present wants imparts a special quality to their outlook on the present. No Russian believes that there is anything to be done to radically change things as they are at present. But if you are powerless to change an unattractive and oppressive society, and if at the same time you are unwilling to seek solace from contemplating its future, what is there left for you but irony and mockery. This seems to be the underlying psychological mechanism behind the outlook of representative young Russian intellectuals. In any case, irony and mockery are the modes of expression of the youth, and they are what separate them from their elders.

The irreverence with which students regard the holy of holies of the higher educational curriculum -- political indoctrination courses -- has often been reported in the West. These courses are still an occasion for ridicule and bitterness on the part of students, even if the bitterness is no longer as openly expressed as it was during the brief thaw before the Hungarian Revolution. The course in the History of the Communist Party, for example, was the one course that gave trouble to otherwise bright students I knew. Their hearts just weren't in it and they contented themselves with devoting a single pre-examination session of rote memorization to it in order to squeak by with a passing grade. But I had my most vivid demonstration of the irreverence of young intellectuals toward the official concerns of their society at a literary party I attended. The party, which was being given to celebrate a contract a young writer had just signed with a publishing house for his first novel, took place several days after the U-2 incident. By the time I arrived, everyone had drunk themselves "to smithereens," as the Russian expression has it. The word quickly went around that I was an American, and I was soon surrounded by a group of young people. One of the first things we talked about, of course, was the U-2. How did Soviet anti-aircraft guns manage to reach Powers if he was flying so high, one person wanted to know. Another one speculated on how Powers had succeeded in surviving a parachute jump from such a height. Then someone took this question up and had the inspiration to suggest that if Powers really did bail out from the height he was alleged to have, he must be due some honors for having achieved the highest parachute jump on record. The idea amused everybody and even excited some to set up a round of cheers for Powers, "the new world's title holder for the highest parachute jump on record." It was a warm May night and the windows were thrown wide open onto the street. Fortunately, I was sober enough to remind my companions that their high spirits might be taken amiss by some eavesdropper.

Obviously, this reaction to the U-2 incident was not the universal one. But it was not that far away from the typical popular reaction to the official version of the U-2 incident in that it contained in common with the popular reaction the ingrained skepticism with which official claims are habitually treated by Russians. I would like to remain with the U-2 incident for a moment, since the popular reaction to it serves as a good example of the popular reception accorded official claims in general. I encountered among the vast majority of the people I knew, none of the hysteria, none of the righteous indignation which the Soviet press at that time so assiduously tried to generate in the people. Except for the few party members or Komsomol stalwarts whom I knew among the youth, whose reaction was deliberately shaped by them to fit the official line, all the young people I knew reacted either with the kind of irreverent irony described above, or else with bewilderment. In the early days after Khrushchev announced that the U-2 had been brought down, many of them simply could not

believe that any such event had taken place. When it became clear that it had, and that, by the U.S. State Department's own admission, Khrushchev's description of it was substantially true, people still did not show signs of hostility toward the United States. They were ready to concede the existence of interests for the sake of which such things had to be done by us; but nevertheless, from a purely personal point of view of their own individual interests, not those of their government, they were grieved by the U-2 incident. They knew it entailed an inevitable reversal of a trend they warmly welcomed -- the improved relations and increase of contacts with the West which had reached their height just prior to the U-2 affair and which were seriously threatened by it. They could predict that the U-2 would involve a tightening up of internal security measures, a renewed anti-Western campaign, and consequently increased risks for them in pursuing contacts with foreigners and less opportunity to see Western films and read Western books. The fundamental hope of all thinking Russians is a normalization of relations with the West. They want nothing more than to be members of the Western community of nations, to be in unmediated contact with its cultural life, to be able themselves, perhaps as a result of the influence of the Western example, to possess a culture, free and unvaried and unfettered by political dogma, and finally, to be able themselves to visit Europe and America some day and see with their own eyes what that tantalizing world from which they are cut off is like. All of these hopes were pushed several steps back from realization by the U-2 incident, and although people did not respond to it with the anger of Soviet officialdom, they did resent it because it caused them personal disappointments.

I think that this profound desire for the normalization of relations with the West is bound to come into conflict with Western policies on other occasions during the coming years, and it would be useful for Radio Liberty to be aware of the existence of a subtle conflict not between the West and the Soviet government, but between the West and Russians who have nothing in common with their rulers. Incidents like the U-2, undertaken by us in self-defense, are bound to be ill-received by Russians who desire good relations with the West. Obviously, we must defend ourselves and we cannot always calculate our actions by what effects they will have on our friends in Russia, but Radio Liberty should be able to describe these actions to a Soviet audience with this calculation in mind. I suggest that it would be effective to describe such actions not only as acts of self-defense, but also with some expression of sympathy to your Soviet audience for the unpleasant effects they may have.

The U-2 affair was also the occasion for another significant expression of opinion by a Russian friend that I think should be described here. Volodya is not young; he is 38, a linguist, the son of a highly-cultured family. And while in one respect, as I shall presently make clear, he is not at all typical of Russian youth, on the

specific point I want to illustrate -- the attitude of educated Russians toward Western sources of information -- he may be taken as representative. Any Westerner who has been on a close footing with Russians has observed in them a strange reaction growing out of their distrust of the official press, and has felt a peculiar embarrassment of power from knowing how credulous and ready to believe your accounts of life in the West your Russian listeners normally are. Volodya served as my ultimate confirmation of this experience. His English is near perfect, and through a combination of lucky accidents he had been able over a period of several years to keep up with such American publications as The New York Times, The Reporter, Commentary, etc. He and I had been holding a running discussion during the course of the week or so that the U-2 affair developed. His first inclination was to suspend judgment and wait until the American side of the story had been told. It worried him that Khrushchev might be telling the truth, and that the American government might actually have sent a spy plane deep into Soviet territory. If so, we could expect little sympathy from him. Why did we want to go ahead and trouble international waters that for the first time in many years seemed to be running calmly, offering the promise of a normal flow of relations between Russia and the West. This was the point he had reached in his evaluation of the situation when he was stunned by the series of contradicting statements issued by the U.S. State Department, first denying and then admitting that the U-2 was on an espionage mission. It was during a Sunday morning stroll, as I recall, when Volodya asked me if I had heard about the State Department's admission. He had made up his mind about the significance of the U-2 for him, and his comment on the State Department contretemps was: "Now you've lost us! You're just as corrupt as we are!"

Nothing could have made it clearer that Volodya, along with many like him, looked to the West for the objectivity and honesty they knew they could not expect from their own press and radio. It is not only that Russians doubt the facts of their official sources of information. It is the official tone, bathetic, self-congratulatory, always high-pitched, that is the despair and often the amusement of any Russian with the rudiments of intelligence and good taste. One has to read the Soviet press not from afar, but in the Soviet Union, and to compare the life it describes and the way it describes it with the lived reality of Soviet citizens, to realize how impossible it is for them not to be contemptuous of it and the government which controls it.

Volodya had special reasons for wanting to be "lost." He belongs to one of the older generations of intellectuals I described above, and shares with them their commitment to Russia's future. He is a veteran of World War II and an intense patriot, bound to his people by bonds of common suffering. He would wish for nothing more than to be able to regard his country as a nation that could hold its head high among the nations of the world. But he knows that as long as it is represented by a tyrannical government, as long as it stands for

reaction in the world at large and for injustice and oppression at home, Russia cannot claim the respect of other peoples. He is uncomfortable with this knowledge; it violates his patriotic feelings, and he is prone to seize at any evidence indicating to him that Soviet Russia is no worse than other nations. That is why Volodya is so easily "lost." Younger intellectuals are not animated by his patriotism; they were not lost to us by the U-2 incident, nor will it be so easy to lose them in the future. But if Volodya has not recovered from his shock at the way the State Department handled the U-2 affair, if he is still "lost" to us, it is important to remember that he need not have been. If the U-2 incident had been handled with an awareness of what effects American official dishonesty might have on our Russian friends, and not only our Russian friends, Volodya would never have been given the opportunity to seize the false comfort he did. I think there is a particularly important lesson here for an organization like Radio Liberty whose business it is to inform Russians and explain events to them. Radio Liberty's audience need never be lost if it makes a continuous effort to avoid offending its special sensitivities, one of the deepest of which is its sensitivity, not only to outright propaganda, but to falsity of tone or manner of any kind.

SUGGESTIONS FOR RADIO LIBERTY

I have been asked to follow this description of Russian youth with recommendations as to what Radio Liberty should broadcast to its audience. I have already said that the first assumption Radio Liberty should make is that it has a friendly audience that does not have to be counter-propagandized. I use the word, propaganda, of course, in its pejorative sense. I am not opposed to propagating ideas, though even here the special sensitivities of the Russian audience must be taken into account, and the ideas must be propagated in a rigidly objective manner, without stunts or gimmicks aimed at increasing their effectiveness. Ideas and knowledge are what Russians want and need. Because of a lack of knowledge Russians often dissipate their critical energies by attacking aspects of Soviet society that are not pertinent to its essential faults.

During my stay in the Soviet Union I became convinced of the value of Radio Liberty, V.O.A. and B.B.C. I am not able to say that large numbers of people listen to their broadcasts -- personally I knew only a few regular listeners -- but a large proportion of the objective information Russians do have of current international events comes from foreign news broadcasts whose contents are transmitted from mouth to mouth by means of what the Russians call their ustnaya gazeta. The eagerness of Russians to listen to foreign broadcasts was demonstrated by the devoted audience that was attracted by the Grundig short-wave radio in my dormitory room.

From time to time I spoke with friends about foreign broadcasts and asked about their tastes and preferences. On the basis of what I heard from them I would recommend programs on various subjects of cultural and political interest, with the accent on attractiveness and gracefulness of exposition. I would select only the best, and make it a practice of going to outside experts who could present ideas at a high professional level and at the same time attractively.

Here are several suggestions for individual programs and program series that I think would find an appreciative audience.

I. PAGES FROM SOVIET HISTORY

One topic might concern an analysis of Soviet industrialization. I think of Alexander Erlich's book, The Industrialization Debate. It would serve as a splendid antidote for a widespread tendency among Russian intellectuals to see Stalin's role in Soviet history in a positive light on the basis of results achieved. Erlich could raise the question of whether the same results might not have been achieved by

less cruel methods. On this question Russians have neither the knowledge, nor the books presenting non-official economic arguments to make accurate judgments.

Another topic for this series might center on Robert Daniels' description of the opposition to Stalin within the party during the 20's and 30's. Russians are ignorant of the particulars of the opposition movements Daniels describes.

A third topic might be: Will freedom inevitably come with economic progress or are totalitarianism and advanced standards of living compatible? This is particularly important. Characteristically, Russian intellectuals temper their opposition to the regime because they are convinced that it is digging its own grave with its economic modernization programs. They may be wrong and should be given to think more about the problems involved.

II. FRESH VIEWS OF RUSSIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

I have already recommended Isaiah Berlin on Belinsky and Herzen and given my reasons for doing so. The emphasis here should be on Western scholarly approaches to Russian culture and history. Special programs might be devoted to literary, social and artistic figures about whom there is official silence in the Soviet Union. Berdyaev, Rozanov, Leontiev and Shestov might be given individual programs. One shouldn't feel it necessary to defend these peoples' ideas -- Russian intellectuals would find most of them not to their taste -- but their ideas could be described and the right of these ideas to have a hearing in their native land defended. There are also writers and artists from the Soviet period that young people would like to hear about. I saw an article on Malevich in a back issue of Encounter. Mandel'stam's poetry plus Veidle's commentary in Vozdushnye puti could be reproduced. Sud idet and the essay on Socialist Realism should be broadcast in full, if they haven't been already.

III. WESTERN LIFE AND CULTURE

This is of enormous interest to Russian youth. There should be round-table discussions on tendencies in modern art and literature; interviews with authors and artists; descriptions of new books and painting exhibitions; discussions of aspects of American life, e.g., higher education, student habits, American scholarships, youth problems, etc.

Let me repeat a comment I have already made after listening to several Radio Liberty broadcasts. I think a way should be found to increase the length of individual programs so that something substantial can be accomplished in each of them. It is a pity to tease your intelligent listeners with bits and snatches from here and there and this and that. They want more than a fleeting acquaintance with things they are ignorant of, and hunger to know about.