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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

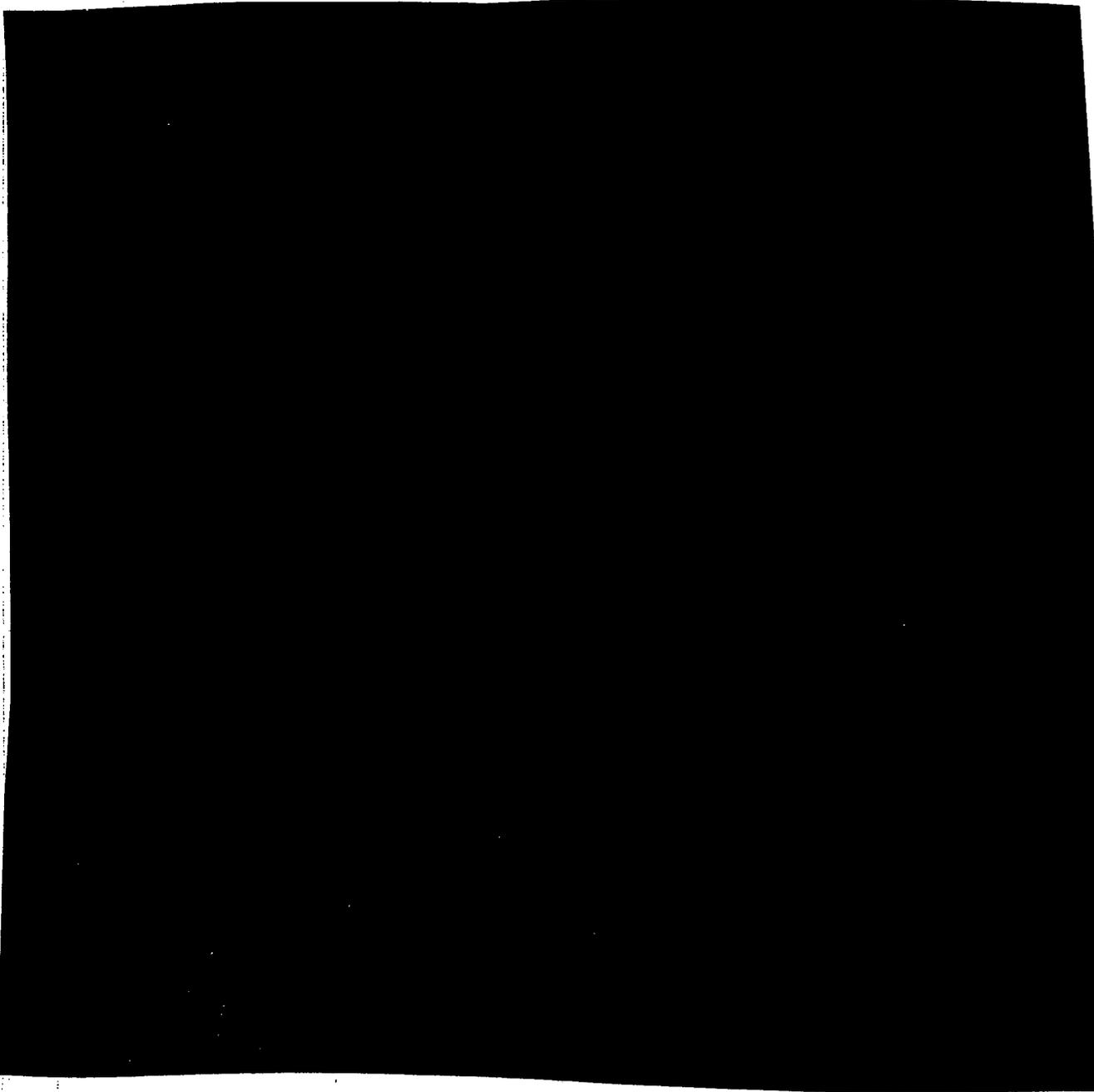
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March 8, 1962

FROM: [REDACTED]

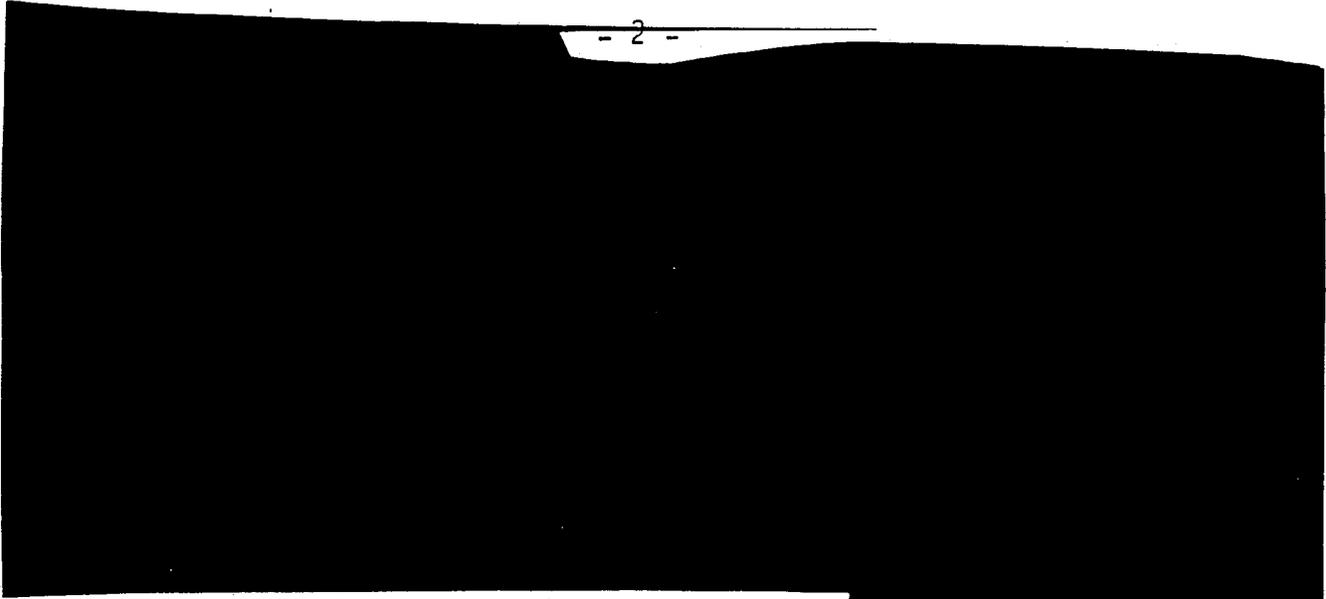
SUBJECT: Soviet Visit Report - [REDACTED]

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Approved for Release
Date OCT 1962

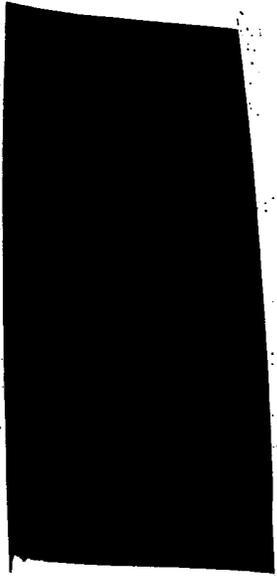
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cc: Messrs:



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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SOVIET VISIT REPORT NO. 7
[REDACTED]

(9) (7)

Foreign Broadcasting

Source said that he did not hear too much about foreign broadcasting except for a few remarks to the effect that BBC is more objective than, and therefore preferable to, VOA. The main objection to VOA seemed to be resentment at hearing foreigners, or worse - emigres, commenting on Soviet affairs. Source felt, however, that foreign radios could comment on Soviet affairs if this were done judiciously. He also suggested that a foreign radio might interest listeners in Soviet news culled from the provincial press, which had not been printed in the big papers. Source further stated that coldly factual broadcasts on Soviet affairs, especially if the source were Soviet, would not be resented by Soviet listeners.

Source said that Soviet students would be most interested in hearing about the lives of their American counterparts. Source suggested emphasizing the following: curricular and extra-curricular life of American students; availability of public education; the fact that almost anyone who desires a college degree can obtain one; the fact that a college degree is not, however, necessary for basic economic security which can be had by people with high school and/or technical training; the great degree of free choice of courses exercised by students throughout their education.

Source concluded his discussion of this topic with the remark that jamming of foreign broadcasts probably has the effect of shaking the confidence of the listeners in their regime and its inability to accept things from the outside.

Access to Information

Source discussed this topic with qualifications, pointing out that the subject touched national pride and that a foreigner was not in a good position to evaluate what information he did manage to get on the topic. Speaking strictly from his own experience, source reported the following incidents: a Soviet student remarked to him with great scorn that there were people who believed everything they read in the Soviet press; a man whom he questioned about the possibility of a Soviet citizen's going into a library and asking to read a copy of The New York Times said that this is possible in theory, but not in fact; the Soviet acquaintances of source had access only to Communist literature of the West. Concerning interest in the copies of The New York Times which source and the other American students received regularly, source said that there was great interest in

the sheer bulk of the paper and in the advertisements, but that most of the students did not read English well enough to plow through the news, even if they had wanted to. Two or three people, a small percentage of the number to whom he showed the paper, asked to borrow it periodically to read the news.

Source found that the interest in Western literature of the people he met was limited to those authors whose works had been translated into Russian.

Travel Opportunities

The only complaints heard by source concerning travel were complaints by people in the provinces that they could not simply move to Moscow and live there.

Soviet Psychology

It was fairly easy, source stated, to establish a superficial rapport with people in Moscow, but extremely difficult to move from acquaintance to friendship. The reasons flow from the barriers of language, culture and, most of all, politics. Source found that incidents such as the U-2 affair were passed off as being "unfortunate and not worthy of our conversation" because if they were discussed they would cause difficulties in the relationship that probably could not be overcome.

Source found it difficult to meet students outside his own particular faculty. The only other places to meet students, he said, were at sport and social functions. He did occasionally get into conversations with people on the street or in restaurants, but these were not lasting relationships.

Source reported his conviction that patriotism plays an extremely important part in the thinking and the political attitudes of Soviet citizens. He felt that the most significant factor in Soviet history was the success of the Soviet regime in fusing Russian patriotism, which has always been an enduring feature of Russian life, with Soviet patriotism. The result, he said, is a feeling of strong personal commitment to the Soviet regime, "our regime," arising out of national patriotism. Source said this is particularly the case among the Russians. Non-Russians, he said, have equally strong regional patriotism, and proclaim themselves also loyal citizens of the Soviet regime, but one can detect, nevertheless, a certain resentment of the Russians as a nationality.

To recapitulate, source stated that the strongest patriotic sentiment in the USSR is Soviet-Russian patriotism. This, he felt, was stronger than plain Soviet patriotism on the part of the Russians, and certainly stronger than whatever Soviet-Russian patriotism is felt by the non-Russians.

Source felt the presence of a strong inferiority complex which usually resulted in attitudes of truculence and boasting in comparing Soviet and Western achievements. This emotion also plays a part in the strong resentment of Soviet citizens to criticism from foreigners or to irreverent remarks about anything which they consider sacred.

Ideology

Concerning this topic, source reported that actual understanding of the complexities of Marxism-Leninism varied considerably among the different classes of people. However, this does not affect their commitment to the regime, since this commitment does not stem from intellectual assent to ideology, but rather stems from patriotic pride in the achievements of the regime which have made backward Russia into a world power in little over 40 years.

Attitudes Toward the Government and its Policies

Source did not think there is any strong opposition in the USSR to the Soviet government. He felt that the attitudes toward the regime range from active support to passive acceptance depending on how much the regime had impinged on the personal life of an individual or his close friends. And many people feel both at the same time: patriotic pride in the achievements, and resentment or passive acceptance of the injustices or inconveniences of daily life.

Source said that the Soviet people he spoke with emphasized that the regime had already satisfied some of their most basic needs, such as minimum economic security and social stability. However, when they see literature and travellers from the West, they realize that they are still far behind us in standard of living and they would like to catch up. There is a certain amount of dissatisfaction with the slow rate of progress in this regard, although, source points out, they are not consumer-oriented as we are and they seem to have fewer demands and to be more satisfied with what they have than we would think possible. Source felt that many people were also dissatisfied with the regime's control of information. However, source emphasized that Soviets generally do not "let their hair down" with foreigners and therefore one cannot really get first hand information on such topics.

Soviet Leaders

Source reported that Lenin is considered the leader who added to the fund of the true faith. Source heard little comment on Stalin, except from one man who had spent three years in a forced labor camp during that time. Although bitter about Stalin this man was very strongly attached to the present regime. Source felt that Khrushchev has really awakened something in the Soviet consciousness. He is widely regarded as a "man of the people" not only for his folksiness, but also for his crude belligerence. Source related hearing Khrushchev speak on the radio after his return from Paris and the summit conference that never took place. Although most of the people in the restaurant where they heard the speech were members of the educated and cultured elite of Soviet society, source said that they "lapped up" the crude and vituperous harangue with evident relish.

Source once showed some Russians an article in Life magazine concerning Trotsky's assassination. They were willing to accept the gist of the article, admitting that "not everything is published in the Soviet press," but they would not believe that the assassin had received the Order of Lenin.

Komsomol

Source said that he tried to determine what percentage of the student body were members of the Komsomol, but he never could find out. He was frequently surprised to find students he would have classified as apolitical showing up occasionally wearing Komsomol pins. The latter type also made scornful remarks about the activists, so it can be assumed that not the entire membership is active or even particularly interested in the work of the Komsomol.

The United States and the West

Source would rank Soviet lack of knowledge about the economic conditions in the U.S. and the West as their greatest misconception about us. He gathered from their talk of unemployment in America that they picture breadlines and starvation in the street. Others feel that perhaps the major difference between our economies and standards of living is that prices are a little higher in the Soviet Union. But source was sure that there was virtually no conception of how much higher the standard of living is in Europe, much less the U.S.

Along with the above, the Soviets consider Western political struc-

ture to be a sham. They don't believe that there are free elections. They believe that all forms of economic, political and cultural life are dictated by the "capitalists" and people with money.

Source declined to give an opinion on whether the Soviet people might be interested in the philosophies and political systems of the West. He felt it might be difficult to awaken interest in something about which there is such general total ignorance.

The most frequently asked questions concerned the economics of daily living, the cost of everything, the state of education and opportunities in the U.S. and, before our national elections, there were curious questions about the candidates. Source heard no comments about Kennedy, but Nixon and Rockefeller were painted as a continuation of the Eisenhower "warmongering" policy. Source said he never really knew all year whether the answers or objections he gave made any impression on his Soviet listeners. They never gave any indication of changing their opinions, but source hoped that perhaps some comments sank in later.

The main source of Soviet information on the U.S. and the West, source said, is the Government news media coupled with the propagandistic accounts of people who return from the West. The Soviet people sense that these accounts are not completely true and this whets their curiosity further. They enjoy talking to tourists from the West to compare what they say with what they have heard.

Source felt that the Soviets took the U-2 incident rather seriously because it touched on their security. When Americans countered with instances of Soviet espionage activities in America, as indicated by the apprehension of Col. Abel, they were completely unwilling to believe that such activities had ever existed.

Chinese

The Soviet attitude toward the Chinese students in their midst was ambivalent; on the one hand, they regard them as allies, but on the other, seem rather awed by their discipline and hard work and regard them apprehensively.

Asians and Africans

Source felt that the Soviets are losing more than they're gaining by having so many Asian and African students in the USSR because the latter don't adjust at all well to Soviet society and feel extremely unhappy and out of their element. They (the Asians and Africans) often went out of their way to seek out American friends and complained about the bureau-

cracy and coldness of all aspects of Soviet life. One African told source that he was convinced that the Russians were trying to kill him, and later that they had tried to arrange a compromising incident with a woman in order to get him expelled. This African was one of the leaders of the African student group that sought to protest the discrimination practiced against them by the Soviets. Source added that he may well have been a neurotic.

Jews in the USSR

Source discussed this subject with only one or two Jews. They told him that their lot was more difficult and their road to success harder because they were Jews. They also explained that for the same reason, they would curtail their relationship with source.

Emigres

Source heard very little discussion about emigres, only a few comments to the effect that they were traitors to the true faith. Source felt that emigres would have to be more careful of what they said than most other people in broadcasting to the USSR.

The Non-Russian Republics

Concerning his tour through several non-Russian republics, source was most impressed by the feeling of Georgian and Armenian nationalism. Source felt that these people were Georgians and Armenians before they were anything else. An English friend of source heard remarks by a Georgian which expressed the greatest contempt for the Russians. The Georgians and Armenians expressed particular pride in their national cultural heritage and were insulted or hurt if the visitors did not know of their leading writers, singers, etc.

Religion

Source gave the opinion that atheism seems to have taken strong hold in the USSR. He found mostly old women, with a sprinkling of younger ones, in the churches. One person told source that "most people have their children baptized and that is their only relation with the church." There are crowds in the churches at special times, such as Easter, but source did not know whether this is a religious manifestation or simply an "old custom."

Soviet students were incredulous, and sometimes amused, to learn that source, as an educated person, professed himself a believer. When he revealed that he is a Roman Catholic, he said, most of his listeners winced. There is a great deal of propaganda directed against the Catholic Church, source said. He characterized the prevalent Soviet attitude toward organized religion as one of contempt and/or indifference.

Soviet Students

Source felt that the motivating principle of the Soviet youth's life is to "get himself a position," a niche in Soviet society which will give him security. It is very difficult to get into Moscow University, but once this has been achieved, source said, the student relaxes and feels that he has achieved the hardest part of his job.

The dilemma of the modern woman over the pulls toward marriage and/or career have been solved by Soviet propaganda and in fact in Soviet life, source said, with marriage and raising of children very definitely taking second place. It is assumed by Soviet women who are qualified to work that the major effort of their lives will be devoted to their work and that their children will be taken care of by State agencies from their earliest days.

Until 1961, source stated, Moscow University dormitory housed its men and women students side by side in Soviet tradition. In 1961, however, they were rigidly segregated. A Soviet student explained to source that there had been "a lot of debauchery."

Most students hope for assignment to jobs in Moscow, or in some other large city in the Soviet Union. A physics student told source that it was not worthwhile to study history in the Soviet Union since one would inevitably end up teaching pre-college level history out in the provinces somewhere. Those who study physics and the other sciences have a good chance of landing in Moscow or another large city, he said.

Source said that he did not have much contact with the cultural elite in the Soviet Union, but the average students seemed to have little or no knowledge of cultural currents in the West beyond jazz and modern painting. Many of them did not even know that there is such a thing as modern American classical music, and one student who had seen "My Fair Lady" in Moscow asked if there were any serious plays given in the U.S. Source felt that the class structure of the pre-revolutionary period, the split between educated and non-educated, is being perpetrated as strongly as ever.

In summing up, source emphasized his feeling that it is extremely