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NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO THE US STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS
(6 - 12 January 1978)

SOVIET UNION

-- *The trial of Soviet dissident Anatoly Shoharansky appears imminent.*

[redacted] charged under Article 64a, which defines the crime of treason to include espionage, and that the trial could last three or four months. In mid-December the Shoharansky family was told that a special extension of the nine-month investigation period had been granted. The delay was widely interpreted as a Soviet effort to keep Shoharansky's status ambiguous before the holiday adjournment of the CSCE review conference in Belgrade. The Belgrade talks are scheduled to reconvene on January 17 and may last at least a month, but probably not much longer. The prediction that Shoharansky's trial could go on for three to four months--an unusually long time for a trial in the USSR--suggests that the Soviets are deliberately planning to begin the trial while the Belgrade conference is in session, and to prolong it past the final close of the meeting. This tactic may reflect a desire to demonstrate that the expected Western pressure concerning the case at Belgrade and elsewhere will not affect the verdict. The Soviets may also hope that Western concern over Shoharansky's ultimate fate may influence the proceedings at Belgrade in Moscow's favor.

This compilation is prepared weekly by the Office of Regional and Political Analysis. Inquiries may be directed to [redacted] of the International Issues Division [redacted]

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- Kirill Podrabinek, the non-activist brother of dissident Aleksandr Podrabinek, was arrested on December 29 on spurious charges of illegal possession of firearms and ammunition. Aleksandr Podrabinek, a leading member of the dissident group monitoring Soviet abuses of psychiatry for political purposes, was told by the KGB that unless he chooses to emigrate, his brother will be put on trial as early as the end of January. *The KGB has carried out the threat to arrest Kirill following Aleksandr's refusal on December 6 to submit to forced emigration. Kirill,*

[redacted] claims a spear-fishing gun and some cartridges found in his home were planted. Aleksandr views these developments as "acts of terrorism," and has drafted a plea on behalf of his brother to Amnesty International. His resolve not to give in to official pressure is weakening, however, and even his family is encouraging him to emigrate voluntarily.

- The chief spokesman for a group of Soviet workers who in December aired their work-related grievances to Western reporters has been released from psychiatric observation. Vladimir Klebanov, a former coal miner, arranged another grievance session with foreign correspondents on January 10. *While the workers' use of Western media to reveal specific cases of bureaucratic disregard of their nominal rights is undoubtedly viewed with alarm by Soviet authorities, this may be tempered by the fact that the workers' group has no philosophical objections to the Soviet system. In charging the authorities with a failure to prosecute malfeasance and curb corruption, the workers are touching on legitimate issues that from time to time have publicly played a role in the domestic political interplay between various interest groups, and may be doing so again.*
- The upsurge in Jewish emigration that began in mid-1977 was sustained through the end of the year. The Netherlands Embassy in Moscow, which represents Israeli interests in the USSR, issued a total of 1,864 Israeli visas to Soviet Jewish

applicants in December. This brought the 1977 total of Jewish emigrants destined for Israel to 17,146, or about 15 percent above the average yearly totals for the preceding two years. *The numbers of Soviet Jews applying for Israeli visas at the Dutch Embassy presumably parallels the issuance of Soviet exit permits, and thus closely reflects the shifting tactics of Soviet emigration policy. The rise in Jewish emigration since mid-1977 has probably reflected in part Moscow's hopes to improve its human rights record during the CSCE review conference at Belgrade, as well as an effort to offset some of the adverse publicity generated abroad by the Soviet anti-dissidence drive during the year. The emigration increase may also be an attempt to show Soviet flexibility in human rights-related policies that do not involve what Moscow views as violations of law by prominent dissidents.*

EASTERN EUROPE

- The Czechoslovak Supreme Court yesterday sustained the mid-October conviction of four dissidents on a variety of antistate charges, but it did reduce the prison term given the main defendant, Ota Ornest, from three and a half to two and a half years. The sentences given the other dissidents--a three-year prison term and two suspended jail sentences--were not changed. *Ornest's sentence was reduced apparently because he has cooperated with the authorities. Since October, he has twice appeared on Czechoslovak television, to admit his guilt and to reject Western assistance. Prague probably calculates that the court's action will underscore the regime's readiness to jail individuals when necessary, as well as its willingness to be lenient toward those who cooperate.*

FAR EAST

- North Korean President Kim Il-song's opening address at the recent meeting of the Supreme People's Assembly in Pyongyang included a sharp attack on Western human rights policies and a