

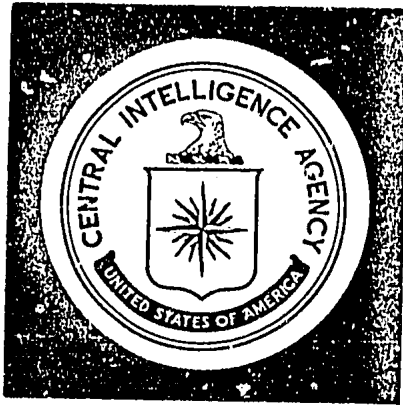
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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

Samizdat: The Soviet Underground Press

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15 November 1971
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
15 November 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Samizdat: The Soviet Underground Press

Summary

The inability of the Soviet leadership to solve many domestic problems and their rejection of any diminution of the party's monopoly in decision-making have resulted in increased disaffection among Soviet intellectuals. These dissidents, finding it increasingly difficult to publish even Aesopian criticism in approved journals, have turned to samizdat, the underground press, to disseminate their ideas.

One of the most significant developments in the underground press during the Brezhnev-Kosygin tenure has been the appearance of periodicals that in some cases have been regularly disseminated in limited numbers for several years. These journals focus on the struggle for human rights in the Soviet Union. The Chronicle of Current Events, published since 1968, emphasizes reporting on violations of human rights by Soviet authorities. The Chronicle provides factual coverage, while another samizdat journal, Social Problems, specializes in theoretical discussions of human rights and related topics. The Ukrainian Herald and the Jewish Exodus highlight more parochial aspects of the struggle for human rights.

Conservative elements, probably in reaction to these journals, have also turned to the underground

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press to espouse Great Russian culture. They first published Slovo Natsii (Message to the Nation), a chauvinistic, racist manifesto. This was followed in early 1971 by Veché, reportedly in its second issue. Both are chauvinistic and anti-Semitic, as well as, pro-Stalin.

Another underground journal Political Diary has been published monthly since late 1964 but has been in the public eye only since last August. It allegedly is the work of "neo-Communists" but has departed from the party line on controversial foreign and domestic events such as the Middle East conflict and the expulsion of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn from the Writers' Union. Unlike the other journals, Political Diary concentrates on scholarly analysis of international events and some domestic problems rather than human rights.

Samizdat is likely to continue to be an aspect of intellectual life in the Soviet Union. It is also probable that in nationalism--which has the potential to become an explosive issue in the Soviet Union--the dissidents have found an issue that can bridge the gap between the intelligentsia and the heretofore passive and disinterested peasants and workers. This already seems to be beginning among Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars and possibly also in the Baltic republics.

On the other hand, the expansion of the so-called democratic movement has resulted in a diffusion of its energies. In addition, the emigration of large numbers of Jews, who reportedly made up 20% of those involved in the production and distribution of samizdat, has led to at least a temporary shortage of talented help. The elimination of dissident leaders such as Vladimir Bukovsky and Petr Grigorenko may also cause difficulties. These problems are not insurmountable, as the continued appearance of the Chronicle and Exodus indicate. But the dissidents are likely to find it more difficult to maintain contact with Western journalists who have recently been the object of official harassment in Moscow.

Despite their vitality, the dissidents and samizdat do not represent a serious challenge to the regime, and

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there is no indication that they have political influence among or support from Soviet policy makers.

In the absence of such a threat, the regime probably believes that the political costs of decisive action to suppress the dissident movement would outweigh the potential advantages, particularly because suppression would raise the specter of renewal of the terror of the Stalin era. The elite itself may fear such a development. Consequently, the regime has preferred to move against the dissidents selectively, attempting to eliminate the leaders and intimidate others.

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Background

1. The post-Khrushchev drive for ideological vigilance has not prevented the appearance of unorthodox literature. Such literature, which seems to increase as the regime demands greater orthodoxy and conformity, has in the past decade become an unofficial Soviet institution called samizdat--literally, "self-publication."
2. Samizdat is the reproduction and distribution of a written text, regardless of contents, with the intention of circumventing official censorship. According to the regime interpretation of Soviet law, this activity is illegal. Even under Stalin, uncensored literature was written by dissatisfied Soviet intellectuals, but it was usually termed "literature for the drawer" because it rarely circulated. During Khrushchev's time, the publication and circulation of this material increased, and there were some attempts to establish underground periodicals. These were generally short-lived and primarily a means of literary expression for young writers who could not publish in the official journals. Since 1966 the underground press has become more political than literary and now includes a number of periodicals.
3. Although samizdat is a major medium for the exchange of ideas among the dissidents, there are others. Tamizdat, books and articles published abroad and smuggled into the Soviet Union, also circulate in the underground. Twenty Letters to a Friend by Stalin's daughter circulated in this form as did Robert Conquest's Great Terror. Likewise, broadcasts by foreign radio stations of petitions and protests from Soviet dissidents are often recorded for wider dissemination within the Soviet Union. This is radizdat. Poets and singers are reported to be using magnitizdat, or recording tapes, to circulate songs of political and social protest against neo-Stalinism.

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4. The existence of this dissident activity may be attributed to the Soviet political system itself which is unresponsive to movement for reform from outside the upper echelons of the party. The intelligentsia believe that a partial solution may be found in increased democratization, focusing on free and open discussion. The regime has rejected this approach forcing many intellectuals to turn to the underground press as the only vehicle available for a nonideological discussion of problems and exchange of ideas.

5. The policies of the Brezhnev-Kosygin leadership, by dashing the hopes raised by Khrushchev's de-Stalinization program, contributed to the recent growth of samizdat. The 1965-66 trial and imprisonment of writers Andrey Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel for "libelling" the Soviet Union marked the real turning point. The trial raised the clear threat, which subsequently became reality, that similar action would be taken against others. The trial intimidated some critics, but more importantly it closed off most of the legitimate avenues for expressing criticism that existed under Khrushchev. During his tenure, dissidents were often able to publish their views in official media by using Aesopian language or by criticizing Stalin's policies. The leaders decision to refurbish Stalin's image and the growing demand for ideological orthodoxy made open criticism impossible. With legitimate channels closed, the dissidents began to resort to petitions and samizdat to disseminate their ideas.

6. An equally important consequence of the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial has been the growth of disaffection and even dissidence among the professional intelligentsia--scientists, economists and managers--who are less and less able to get a hearing for reformist proposals. In recent years the professional intelligentsia has played an important role in samizdat, replacing fiction writers as the dominant force behind the underground press. The result has

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been a more scholarly and analytical product; e.g., the journal Social Problems.

7. Finally, the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial politicized dissent and samizdat by making the point that intellectual and aesthetic freedom are impossible without respect for law and human rights. Subsequent trials in 1967 and 1968 and the arrest of biologist Zhores Medvedev in mid-1970 reinforced this attitude as did the treatment of Nobel laureate Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn later that year.

Aims of Samizdat

8. The dissidents have a common interest in opposing the authorities' growing tendency to use Stalinist methods--short of mass terror--in controlling critics. The dissidents are disturbed by violations of constitutional rights in trials involving charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," but they also regard other aspects of domestic policy as neo-Stalinist. These include the denial of the right to emigrate, the persecution of religious believers and national minorities, and the use of psychiatric institutes to silence outspoken critics. Although some of the dissidents are concerned with reform in the political and economic system, the bulk of underground literature reaching the West deals primarily with the question of human rights. (One Soviet intellectual contends that many dissidents have abandoned the hope for meaningful political and economic reform and are interested only in trying to make the authorities respect the constitution and laws.) Since progress in one area will have some effect in the other, this distinction is somewhat artificial, but it does reflect the attitude of the dissidents.

Samizdat's Periodic Press

9. The underground press includes a rather large number of journals that publicize violations of human rights and a few that provide scholarly,

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sometimes highly theoretical discussions of human rights. Certain journals, such as the Jewish Exodus and The Ukrainian Herald, represent particular interest groups. Social Problems, apparently the organ of the unofficial Committee for Human Rights, provides a medium for a theoretical and scholarly analysis of problems relating to human rights in the peculiar Soviet setting. Among the samizdat journals the Chronicle of Current Events is unique by virtue of its catholicity and longevity. Since the spring of 1968 the Chronicle has reported on violations of human rights involving virtually every stratum of society. It has also defended the rights of individuals whose views it obviously does not share.

10. In addition to these publications, there are some less important ones representing more conservative constituencies. The best known of these is Veche, the organ of a nationalistic group interested in preserving Russian culture. The Veche group has little interest in attracting Western attention and there is little information available about it.

11. Another nationalistic product is Slovo Natsii (Message to the Nation), a manifesto published by a chauvinistic group of "Russian Patriots." Slovo Natsii and Veche represent an extreme development of the widespread interest among Great Russians in preserving their cultural heritage.

12. Standing somewhere between the liberal-constitutionalist publications and the conservative nationalists is a scholarly journal, the Political Diary. It reportedly is the organ of a small group of "liberal socialists" and covers a wide range of subjects with emphasis on history, literature, and international affairs.

The Chronicle of Current Events

13. If the "democratic movement," as the loose coalition of civil rights activists is usually

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called, has an official organ, the Chronicle is it. The Chronicle takes its theme from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948, which states that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression." Like virtually every other samizdat journal, the Chronicle maintains that it is not an illegal publication. It claims the unique situation in the Soviet Union requires it to operate cautiously. Editors have been imprisoned or otherwise taken out of circulation, but the Chronicle goes on. It retains a solid core of supporters, perhaps totaling several hundred, and at least 21 issues have been published since April 1968.

14. The bi-monthly Chronicle was at first a rather haphazard collection of factually presented notes about specific violations of human rights in the Soviet Union. The first few issues were concerned primarily with the arrest and trial of young writers and with the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. By December 1968, however, the Chronicle began to take shape as a journal with a regular format. It has sections devoted to reports on important trials or administrative persecution, news briefs, and a review of other samizdat in circulation. The first issue of the Chronicle contained about 5,000 words; recent issues have been in the 16,000-20,000 word range. Moreover, its network of "reporters" has expanded to a point where information from distant areas of the Soviet Union usually appears in each issue.

15. Although the Chronicle format has remained relatively unchanged since December 1968, its scope and coverage grow with virtually every issue. In addition to feature articles on subjects of public concern--the Leningrad trial of Jewish hijackers in December 1970, the expulsion of novelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn from the Union of Writers, and the incarceration of dissidents in psychiatric institutes--a typical issue contains many short items reporting

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arrests, trials, and extra-legal persecution of "non-conformists." On occasion Chronicle reports have contained partial transcripts of trials, KGB interrogations, and psychiatric examinations, suggesting to some observers that the dissidents may have at least the passive cooperation of someone or some group within the KGB. In all, the Chronicle has reported over 300 judicial proceedings and numerous cases of extra-judicial persecution, ranging from a "severe reprimand," to expulsion from the party and dismissal from employment. The reports, originating from diverse areas of the Soviet Union, most frequently involve violations of laws on "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" or "slandering" the Soviet political and social system.

16. With issue No. 5 of 28 February 1969, Chronicle began to include as a regular section a survey of items circulating in other samizdat. These surveys that cover some 250 items of various length and importance are generally limited to a short summary of the major theme. Editorial comment is rare. In some cases, this section is the only source of information about items circulating in samizdat. In issues Nos. 9 and 10, for example, Chronicle commented briefly on three issues of Crime and Punishment, a "publication devoted to uncovering the crimes of the butchers of Stalin's time and what the butchers are doing now." It alleges that the "informer" A. Ya. Sverdlov is now writing children's stories under the pseudonym A. Ya. Yakovlev.

The Chronicle's Progeny

17. In trying to provide information on the entire human rights movement, the Chronicle has inevitably devoted less attention to some aspects of the struggle than certain interest groups would like. To fill the gap, two relatively new journals, the Ukrainian Herald and Exodus; have begun publication. Although their appearance attests to the

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growing interest in human rights in the Soviet Union, they may in the short run have a debilitating effect by diffusing dissident energies. There have also been reports suggesting that cooperation and communication between the Moscow dissidents and those in the Ukraine has declined somewhat since the appearance of The Herald.

18. The Ukrainian Herald in form and content is very similar to the Chronicle. The primary difference is the Herald's emphasis on violations of "democratic freedoms" and of national sovereignty in the Ukraine ("cases of chauvinism and Ukrainophobia"). The journal's sole task, according to an editorial statement, is to provide "objective information about hidden processes and phenomena in Ukrainian public life." Like its precursor, the Herald avoids polemics in favor of straight reporting. Although it first appeared in January 1970, only 5 issues have been published, 4 of which have reached the West.

19. Exodus, in its fifth issue, is the organ of Soviet Zionists. Jewish dissidence, as a distinct element was a consequence of the Arab-Israeli War of 1967, and of the anti-Zionist propaganda which Soviet media poured forth in its aftermath.

20. Unlike Chronicle and the Ukrainian Herald, Exodus is more emotional than dispassionate, consisting primarily of appeals, open letters, and statements by Jews wanting to emigrate to Israel. The fourth issue departed from this format, by providing a lengthy substantive account of the trial of the accused Leningrad hijackers in December 1970. It also included a transcript of their appeal to the Supreme Court. A fifth issue of Exodus reportedly is circulating in the Soviet Union. The man who claims to have been its editor emigrated to Israel some months ago.

Social Problems

21. In the fall of 1969 the journal Social Problems began to appear every other month. Unlike

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most other samizdat editors, Valeri Chalidze, openly acknowledges his rôle and lists his name and telephone number in each issue. Chalidze also requires that contributions to the journal bear the author's true name. This unique policy is part of Chalidze's effort to give substance to his claim that Social Problems is a legal publication and that his right to publish it is guaranteed by the Constitution. During an interview with Soviet authorities, Chalidze went so far as to challenge them to test the legality of his position in open court. There has been no official response to the challenge, but, according to a Chronicle report, Chalidze has been dismissed, for "ideological" reasons, from his position at a research institute in Moscow.

22. The most recent issue of the journal, No. 8, was devoted to the deliberations of the Committee for Human Rights, suggesting that the journal may become the Committee's "official" organ. The Committee was established in November 1970 by Chalidze, Andrey Sakharov and Andrey Tvyordokhlebov. It interested itself in assisting persons concerned with research on the theoretical aspects of human rights in socialist society and in publicizing documents of international and Soviet law on human rights. In December, the Committee elected Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn an "associate member." Aleksandr Yezenin-Volpin and Boris Tsukerman, a physicist who had been particularly active as a legal adviser to Jews interested in emigrating to Israel, were elected "consulting experts." With the exception of Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn, everyone publicly associated with the Committee has published at least one article in Social Problems. However, Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov have spoken out about human rights and Sakharov's March 1970 letter to Brezhnev and Kosygin, which was also signed by Roy Medvedev and Valery Turchin, was published in Social Problem's fifth issue.

23. It is Chalidze's stated intention to explore the extent to which Soviet laws are capable of guaranteeing human rights and the extent to which they correspond to those recommended by the UN. Articles on legal topics form the bulk of his journal.

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The journal, which began as a random collection of samizdat texts, is now arranged in three broad categories, General Topics, Law, and Documents. The journal has published translations of various international agreements on the question of human rights as well as articles from the foreign press. It has also featured pieces on the development of class discrimination in Soviet Law.

24. The dissidents seem to be making a concerted effort to attract Western attention to the problem of compulsory hospitalization of dissidents in psychiatric institutes, probably in response to increased use of this technique by Soviet authorities. Articles on the subject have appeared in the Chronicle and Social Problems, but a more direct approach was taken by the dissident Vladimir Bukovsky. Bukovsky sent transcripts of psychiatric examinations abroad with the request that Western psychiatrists comment on the validity of the Soviet diagnoses. On the basis of these documents a group of British psychiatrists expressed "grave doubts" about the compulsory treatment of the individuals involved and proposed to raise the subject at an international conference later this year. The forthcoming publication of the English version of Zhores Medvedev's book, A Question of Madness, dealing with his own experiences in a psychiatric hospital last year, and Bukovsky's present incarceration in Moscow's notorious Serbsky Institute are likely to add to the regime's embarrassment on this issue.

25. Although it is doubtful that Social Problems will have any direct impact on the Soviet actions toward law and human rights, the activities of the journal along with the Committee on Human Rights do fill an important gap in systematically providing Soviet intellectuals with the basic legal information that they previously lacked in confrontations with the regime.

Nationalistic Samizdat

26. Possibly in reaction to the activities of the "democratic movement," a Russian nationalist movement seems to have emerged outside officially

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controlled channels. Some reports have alleged that the movement is formally, although clandestinely, organized as the Za Rodinu (For the Fatherland) Society and that it has the support of the KGB. Although it is not possible to confirm the allegation of KGB support, it should be noted that in RSFSR, in contrast to the Ukraine, nationalism has been taken up by highly conservative individuals, such as Ivan Shevtsov and Vsevolod Kochetov, who reportedly enjoy high level political protection. In any case, the description of the group as xenophobic and anti-Semitic raises the possibility that it may be involved in the production of some newly emerged samizdat.

27. Although Russian nationalism has found official expression in journals such as Molodaya Gvardiia, the more extreme elements have turned to samizdat to express concern about the state of Russian culture. Chronicle No. 17 (December 1970) reported the appearance of Slovo Natsii (Message to the Nation). The authors of the message signed themselves "Russian Patriots." They took issue with all liberals, according to the Chronicle, accusing them of holding views which are "unsubstantiated and harmful." The statement voiced concern for the purity of the white race which is being tainted by "random hybridization." It called for a rebirth of Orthodoxy, the national religion, and of a "great, united and indivisible" Russia.

28. Slovo Natsii was probably a one-shot production but in January of this year another nationalistic publication began circulating in Moscow. Taking its name from an ancient Russian popular assembly, Veche has published at least two issues, neither of which has reached the West. The editors, led by V. Osipov, announced that Veche is a "Russian patriotic journal" intended "to resurrect and preserve the national culture, the moral and intellectual heritage of our ancestors and perpetuate the guiding line of the Slavophiles and Dostoyevsky."

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29. There was some initial confusion about the relationship between Slovo Natsii and Veche. The Chronicle attempted to clarify the problem in its March issue. According to Chronicle, Slovo Natsii is a "political declaration preaching racism, state despotism, and great power chauvinism," while Veche's nationalism takes the form "only of a particular attitude to Russian history, culture, and the Orthodox religion." Nevertheless, it noted, Judophobia and Stalinist sympathies are characteristic of some Veche contributors "but by no means all of them."

30. In March 1971, Osipov, besides Chalidze the only self-admitted editor of a samizdat journal, replied to Western press reports about Veche. He rejected the allegation that Veche was an extremely chauvinistic underground journal, contending that he would publish the journal bearing his name and address openly if the opportunity were available. He did not, however, challenge the allegation that the journal has anti-Semitic overtones.

31. Since Veche has rejected political problems as one of its themes and the Chronicle has noted that it will not comment regularly on Veche because its "concerns are not connected with the question of human rights," it is unlikely that there will be any interaction between the two publications.

32. Publications with the chauvinistic tone of Veche and Slovo Natsii are rare. Chronicle did, however, report the trial of a group of Armenians who produced In The Name of The Motherland, a publication calling for an independent Armenia. In addition, the Crimean Tatars, who have been trying for years to receive permission to resettle in their native homeland, have also circulated samizdat, primarily in the form of petitions and appeals. Some of these have reportedly borne the signatures of thousands of Tatars. There are rumors that some of the younger, more militant Crimean Tatars intend to follow the example of Soviet Jews and try to leave the Soviet Union. They are reported to be interested in emigrating to Turkey.

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The Aloof "Liberal Socialists"

33. Standing between the constitutionalists and the nationalists is a small group of research scientists and academics that has published a very scholarly journal, Political Diary, since late 1964. The journal received extensive publicity in the West after 11 issues were given to Western journalists in Moscow in August. Also included was the table of contents of a twelfth issue and a long article by Roy Medvedev from a thirteenth issue. According to press reports, the editors made the issues available so that Westerners could get some idea of what concerns "liberal socialists" in the Soviet Union. The possibility that the journal stopped publication could also have prompted this breach of secrecy.

34. Initial western press reports noted that the journal was unknown prior to receipt of the selected issues by the journalists. This is not entirely true. In its April 1969 issue, Chronicle carried a review of an item entitled "On Certain Current Events." The contents, which would date the item at about January or February 1969, were the same type of material that Political Diary published in its variously titled "current events" section, such as expulsions from the party, the attempt on the life of Brezhnev, and an article on the notation of Stalin's birthday on the 1969 desk calendars. Moreover, Chronicle noted that the publication was "analytical" and contained "a number of judgments and speculations," "in particular speculations and rumors from "high political" circles. In conclusion, Chronicle welcomed the appearance of the journal--suggesting that it was the first copy it received. Chronicle's acceptance of the journal as a "legitimate samizdat" helped to establish the authenticity of the "new" publication.

35. Unlike Social Problems, Political Diary has a broad range of interests and is aimed at a small group of "subscribers," who presumably are also its contributors. One journalist reported that its circulation is limited to a select group of 50. Articles, almost always anonymous, on literature,

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history, economics and foreign and domestic affairs are standard fare in Political Diary, but, contrary to press reports, it contains little in the way of political gossip. Some of the political rumors it does contain are replays from foreign radio broadcasts. Unlike other underground journals, however, a large part of each issue is taken up with excerpts from the Soviet press, Pravda, Literaturnaya Gazetta, and Novy Mir, and with discussion of Marxist theory. The editors generally organize this wide range of subjects under five headings: Current Events; About Certain Books, Articles and Manuscripts; History; Literary Life; and, Notes on Various Themes.

36. Among the more interesting items on the political leaders contained in the journal was a short report in the April 1970 issue which dealt with Brezhnev's speech for the celebration of the Lenin Centennial. According to the report, a few days before the anniversary, V. Golikov and S. P. Trapeznikov, both labelled as neo-Stalinists, criticized the speech as revisionist and proposed extensive changes. Brezhnev referred their comments to the authors of the speech, including Bovin, who is described as Brezhnev's personal assistant. The authors prepared a sharp reply accusing Golikov and Trapeznikov of departing from the general party line. Brezhnev apparently took no active part in the exchange between his assistants and Political Diary reports that the speech was ultimately delivered without the proposed changes.

37. This story has not been reported elsewhere, but the details ring true on the basis of other evidence. Golikov, who is one of Brezhnev's personal assistants, and Trapeznikov, who heads a central committee department and is regarded as a Brezhnev protege, have both written pro-Stalin articles in the past. On the other hand, A. Ye Bovin, whose exact position in the central committee apparatus is unknown, has publicly espoused liberal ("revisionist") positions in the past. Moreover, Brezhnev's Lenin Anniversary speech, which took a moderate line on many questions, could indeed have sounded "revisionist" to Golikov and Trapeznikov.

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38. In both foreign and domestic affairs, Political Diary departs from the party line. An article on the Middle East, for example, contends that a large part of the intelligentsia, "including Russians, Ukrainians and Moldavians" and a "rather significant part" of the working class, oppose Soviet involvement with the Arabs. It states that after years of Soviet aid the Arabs still oppress Communists and are incapable of caring for Soviet equipment or of using it to defend themselves. Moreover, the article lays part of the responsibility for the June 1967 war at the door of the Soviet government for refusing to take any action to prevent the withdrawal of UN forces from the area.

39. Political Diary's anonymous contributors also make interesting comments about Soviet policy toward Europe. One author argues that real peace and security in Europe can only be achieved if both sides make concessions. He suggests that the Soviets make concessions on Berlin and withdraw their troops from Eastern Europe. He also alleges that the invasion of Czechoslovakia set a dangerous precedent which could ultimately be turned against Soviet interests, particularly in France, Spain, and Italy where he sees a real possibility for the emergence of Communist governments. He claimed that progress in Europe will be most difficult, if not impossible, unless the Soviet government rejects the premise that its actions are always right and those of its opponents always wrong.

40. Side by side with its unorthodox attitude on diplomatic affairs in Europe, Political Diary makes some heretical observations on the arms race. An article in the April 1970 issue, for example, argued that Khrushchev, "who told the world about the creation of a Soviet defensive missile system," is responsible for the new round in the arms race involving ABMs. An earlier issue, reporting on a dialogue between physicist Andrey Sakharov and journalist Ernst Genri, quoted the physicist as stating that an effective ABM system is an illusion.

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Relating the disparity between the US and Soviet economies to the issue of defense expenditure, the article alleges that if the US were to devote 10% of its GNP to defense, the Soviet Union would be forced to devote 30% of its GNP to defense in order to maintain the balance of nuclear rocket forces. Noting that the Soviet economy cannot support a defense budget of such a size, the article argues that, while both sides have an interest in the success of the SALT negotiations, the Soviet stake is greater.

41. On the domestic scene, Political Diary has departed from official positions on virtually every controversial event covered. These include the secrecy that surrounded the ouster of Khrushchev, the expulsion of Solzhenitsyn from the Writers' Union, and the dismissal of Aleksandr Tvardovsky as editor of Novy Mir. In addition, articles have appeared which criticized the inefficiency of the Soviet economy, particularly agriculture, the secrecy that surrounds the deliberations of the Politburo and the impotence of the Supreme Soviet. There is, however, no criticism aimed directly at members of the Politburo.

42. Although Political Diary treats a wide range of subjects with scholarly precision, it seems to lack the commitment of other samizdat publications even to the idea of a free press. In the issues available, only one article, written under the pseudonym A. Antipov, addresses itself to the problem of censorship. Beyond this and its support for Solzhenitsyn, the Political Diary shows little sign of being interested in the human rights issue--even on an abstract level or in the "democratic movement." Unlike Chronicle and Social Problems, Political Diary is not the organ of civil libertarians.

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43. In spite of its aloofness from the concerns of human rights activists, the Political Diary shares their opposition to Stalinism, anti-Semitism, dogmatism, and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The journal's critical attitude suggests that its editors are interested in reform of the Soviet political system, probably along the lines of the ill-fated Czechoslovakian experiment. The 11 available issues do not indicate, however, that the editors have outlined a program of reform, like Sakharov's, or that they themselves are politically important individuals who have direct access to policy makers.

44. The value of the Political Diary to the Western observer is limited because it lacks important factual information on Soviet affairs or leaders. At best, it serves to fill a gap in samizdat's political spectrum and is likely to have only a limited impact within the Soviet Union.

The Attitude of the Authorities

45. Inasmuch as the Soviet authorities have demonstrated an ability to cope with dissidence the continued publication of Chronicle and the proliferation of its offspring raise with renewed emphasis the question of why the regime has failed to suppress at least samizdat's periodical press. There are several possible explanations. One is that this is an activity not considered a serious threat to the stability of the system. According to this interpretation, samizdat is regarded as a safety valve distracting the dissidents from more serious activities.

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46. There is, however, evidence suggesting that the safety value may actually be closely monitored by the KGB with the intention of identifying malcontents. The Chronicle, for example, warned its readers not to try to trace the journal to its source lest they be regarded as provocateurs. Political Diary also reported a rumor to the effect that the KGB had produced radioactive copies of a samizdat text to trace its circulation. Farfetched as this is, it does indicate the dissidents' concern that the authorities may be abiding samizdat for their own purposes. To some extent, this seems to be borne out by an annex to Zhores Medvedev's "Black Office," an attack on official censorship of mail in the Soviet Union.

47. According to Medvedev, in the fire of enthusiasm after the denunciation of Stalin, some physicists organized a weekly "Scientists Day" at Obninsk. They invited literary critics, composers, producers and social activists from Moscow as speakers. A "friend" of one of the speakers began to supply the group with samizdat publications and works from abroad. The "friend" noted who read the works he supplied and ultimately they were all dismissed from their jobs or otherwise disciplined. The "friend," however, did not suffer for his liberalism. Although the group reconstituted itself, outside speakers were no longer invited.

48. Another explanation, held by some dissidents, is that the elite itself is wary of unleashing the KGB. If, as the Chronicle reports suggest and the appearance of Political Diary seems to confirm, varying degrees of dissidence have affected many elements of Soviet society, complete suppression would probably necessitate purges reminiscent of the Stalin era--in scope if not in numbers. The elite, then, may fear that the cost of such a move, in terms of adverse reaction abroad, is too high to pay at this time. There is also the memory of terror once unleashed coming full circle to consume its instigators.

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49. The regime has not moved decisively to suppress dissent, but it has not failed to act. The trial of Sinyavsky and Daniel in 1966, despite the political embarrassment it entailed, did contribute to silencing dissident voices among the establishment intellectuals. Since then quiet "purges" of liberal editorial boards, pressure from professional organizations--such as the Union of Writers--and limitation on foreign travel have been sufficient to keep most of this group in line.

50. On the other hand, the trial created new problems for the regime by politicizing dissent and attracting members of the professional intelligentsia to samizdat activity. The regime has used a variety of techniques, including trials, to cope with this. The show trials of the mid-60s, however, have been replaced by quiet trials in the provinces or other remote areas closed to foreigners. In 1970, for example, Andrey Amalrik, author of Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?, was tried in Sverdlovsk although he allegedly committed his crime in Moscow. Even in outlying regions, the trials are frequently conducted in camera. The Chronicle has reported more than 300 trials and cases of extra-legal persecution, such as demotion, or loss of employment or security clearances.

51. With increasing frequency, Soviet authorities have resorted to removing outspoken dissidents to psychiatric hospitals. Until recently, the use of mental institutions had the advantage of avoiding the publicity of a prolonged trial. Psychiatric hospitals, apparently administered by the MVD and run jointly with the KGB, exist in Kazan, Leningrad, Minsk, Sychevka, Chernyakhovsk, and Moscow, where the notorious Serbsky Institute is located. According to the Chronicle, the Leningrad hospital alone contains 16 political prisoners, and the total throughout the country is estimated to be at least 200.

52. Besides persecuting individual dissidents, Soviet authorities have allegedly taken some steps to frustrate the reproduction of samizdat texts.

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Dissenters have reported, for example, that at the end of 1969 thin typing paper, carbon paper, typewriter ribbons, and photographic paper--all used in the reproduction process--began to disappear, first in outlying areas and then in larger cities. One dissident also complained that the most available models of typewriters are unsuitable for copying samizdat because they are too fragile to produce more than a few copies at a time. In October 1970, the Lebedev Institute, with which Sakharov and other noted dissident scientists have been associated, was criticized by the Central Committee for the "considerable shortcomings" in the work of the institute's party committee. The Central Committee directed the local committee to indoctrinate scientists with "the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of current political, socio-economic and philosophical problems" and to foster an "uncompromising attitude toward anti-Communism and revisionism."

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