Discord and Unity: Soviet Dissident Thought

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DISCORD AND UNITY:
SOVIET DISSIDENT THOUGHT

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Government
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Kevin Milton Quinley
1977
APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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Approved, August 1977

Michael G. Hillinger
Michael G. Hillinger

Bruce Rigelman

Chonghan Kim
FOR MY PARENTS
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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to dispel the prevalent Western notion of a monolithic dissident movement within the Soviet Union. Doctrinal dispute among individual dissenters reveals an entire philosophical spectrum within the movement itself.

To prove that the dissident movement is variegated, we have compared the political thought of three prominent Soviet dissenters—Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sakharov, and Andrei Amalrik. Writings of each thinker have been examined to reveal a lively debate over subjects such as the viability of socialism, the future of Russia, and the wisdom of detente.

Solzhenitsyn emerges as a Christian ideologist in the 19th century Russophile vein. Sakharov starts from a neo-Marxist perspective in the late 1960's, only to discard the socialist label in 1975 in favor of liberalism and internationalism. Amalrik serves as a prophet who foretells Russia's doom. He is less analytical, more visceral in his dissent than Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov. These men sustain a political dialogue which engages other dissenters such as Roy Medvedev and Vladimir Bukovsky. Despite their differences, however, the dissidents are united in their support of basic human rights.

The thesis ends by suggesting that an emasculated political movement is the price dissidents pay for fidelity to their ideals. Espousing toleration and free discussion in the face of Party decree, the dissidents practice these same qualities among themselves and undermine their movement's unity. An emerging dissident movement may hint at growing pluralism within Soviet society. Discord among dissenters reveals much pluralism within the movement itself, thus laying to rest one Western misconception.
DISCORD AND UNITY:

SOVIET DISSIDENT THOUGHT
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Context and Relevance

Let us start from the premise that no government ever commands the unanimous support of its citizenry. Dissent is ubiquitous, not in the sense that some regimes govern entirely disloyal populations, but rather in the sense that some opposition can be found within any state. One would not expect even the most dictatorial regime to be free of disaffected elements, however miniscule or concealed. Given the soundness of this premise, the study of political dissent in the Soviet Union is clearly justified. This is not to say that if dissent was rare, then studying it in the Soviet Union would be an illegitimate endeavor. But if dissent was merely a sporadic phenomenon, the Soviet Union would be the last place where we would expect to find it.

Since the short-lived cultural thaw following Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet leadership has reacted to political dissent in an indecisive manner. Steering a course between Stalinist terror and unrestrained liberalization has been the awkward task of the Georgian's successors. Even Nikita Khrushchev, who initially repudiated Stalin's harshness, retracted the policy of cultural toleration once he saw the excesses committed in the name of the thaw. Stalin's answer to opposition had been simple. Few were in the voices that bullets,
beatings, and prisons could not silence. Yet such policies, though
decisive in their time, were rejected by Khrushchev in 1956. When
Khrushchev later wished to rein in the forces he had unleashed, no
alternate course was readily available. In the late 1950's and early
1960's, Soviet intellectuals were in the uncomfortable position of not
knowing just how much they could complain without inviting reprisals.

Khrushchev's heirs offered a partial answer in early 1966. Two
writers, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, were convicted of violating
Article 70 of the Soviet Constitution. Specifically, Daniel and
Sinyavsky were accused of having pseudonymously written anti-Soviet
articles which later appeared in Western bourgeois publications. For
this crime, the men were sentenced to labor camps for five to seven
years. A few prominent intellectuals objected to the trial, fearing
that it presaged a return to Stalinist intolerance. Sympathetic
writers issued protest letters, formed defense committees, and secretly
circulated the trial's transcript. All of this may now seem mild, but
in Stalin's time such insolence was suicidal. Many observers now
believe the trial heralded the first steps of cultural de-Khrushchev-
ization undertaken by the Brezhnev-Kosygin leadership. Above all, the
post-1966 era has witnessed the development in Russia of what may be
called a dissident movement.

For numerous reasons one may justifiably refer to a dissident
movement. Ideologically, this "political counterculture" embraces many
common causes. Except for a few underground neo-Stalinist and fascist
groups, nearly all dissidents esteem spiritual and moral values, oppose
injustice and conformity, and desire a larger measure of legality in
government action. But this point should not be overdrawn, as it often has been in the West, to say that there are no major differences among dissidents's ideas. Many prominent scientists, artists, and writers are aware of the radical nature of their views. Members of the dissident community are attentive to each other's thoughts and are accustomed to informally discussing taboo subjects. If political theory consists of reasoned discourse through time, then dissent occupies its own niche within the study of political philosophy. Unsanctioned political discourse has surfaced in the Soviet Union. All three thinkers analyzed herein—Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sakharov, and Andrei Amalrik—engage in political dialogue. Even before his exile, Solzhenitsyn maintained a lively correspondence with Sakharov. Sakharov has critiqued Solzhenitsyn's ideas, and the novelist has responded in kind. Sakharov has organized a Human Rights Committee which has as its aim the protection of fellow dissidents. Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov are co-editors of Kontinent, an émigré journal of East-West relations. Amalrik has protested at political trials, and has appraised the views of other dissidents. By means of circulated letters, petitions, samizdat (secretly self-published writings), and informal contacts, the dissident movement has formed and has maintained a remarkable degree of cohesion. Still, one must remember that such cohesion falls short of unanimity.

Increased publicity has thus produced in the 1970's a situation where the importance of the dissident movement transcends the domestic realm. The existence of a dissident current beneath the ideological mainstream now has international political ramifications.
Western nations have developed a keener interest in human rights in the Soviet Union. For example, the 1974 Jackson Amendment to the Trade Reform Act conditioned favorable trade terms on increased Soviet toleration of emigration requests. Adherence to the 1975 Helsinki Agreement on European Security would presumably result in greater freedom of expression within the USSR. Private groups such as Amnesty International monitor the observance of basic human rights within the Soviet Union. Valentin Turchin, the director of Amnesty International's Moscow chapter, believes that his findings help determine Western policies toward the Soviet Union. Attempts to cow dissidents jeopardize the entire detente relationship between the US and the USSR. Recent diplomatic skirmishes over Soviet threats to Andrei Sakharov dramatize the fact that toleration of dissent is now key to gauging the status of East-West relations.

Additionally, much evidence shows that dissidents articulate views held by many other people within Russia. Though Khrushchev was a patron of Solzhenitsyn until 1962, it is doubtful that the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime favors any innovative writer. Nonconformists seem to have only a marginal influence on the Kremlin's decision-making process. Yet dissidents probably reflect the opinions of a larger number of citizens, and these renegades may thus "represent and enhance an important, but suppressed potential for political change." For instance, evidence indicates that most talented Soviet writers support Solzhenitsyn's attacks on censorship. Many Soviet scientists secretly applaud Sakharov's liberalism. British journalist Henry Fairlie notes
that Soviet dissidents are no longer "treated as individuals with a personal case against their governments, but as representatives of a wider cause." \(^1\)

Analyzing the political thought of modern Soviet dissidents may thus complement innumerable studies of political elites. Tapping this subterranean current of political thought may lend clues concerning the direction of and prospects for change in the Soviet Union. Given the absence of opinion polls conducted among Soviet citizens, studying dissident thought offers a way to gauge roughly the content of political attitudes below the elite level.

Anyone interested in both Soviet studies and political theory has usually concentrated on the official ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Until 1960's, this preoccupation was understandable since bold dissidents were silenced before their pleas reached Western ears. Interest in the official ideology siphoned off energy that might have been directed toward dissident studies. With the emergence of an opposition movement in the 1960's, however, the conventional view of a monolithic Soviet society became outdated. Open dissent may portend the emergence of pluralism within Soviet society. No longer does all political action and thought answer to the state's beck and call. Our aim is to evidence these faint signs of pluralism and also to dispel another conventional view of a monolithic dissident movement. To this end, the thesis may offer insights to the emerging, but heretofore relatively untouched, field of dissident studies.

Divisions between domestic and foreign affairs are increasingly blurred in an age of economic interdependence and instantaneous
communication. This development offers a wider audience to dissidents and removes their cause from the sole realm of internal politics. Few will deny that domestic opposition to the Soviet regime has become more vocal, dissent more publicized, and toleration a more important determinant of East-West relations. But if a study of political opposition is to be purposeful, one should analyze the meaning of the term "dissident."

Components of Dissidence

Like many other concepts, dissidence is a culturally-determined phenomenon. What constitutes a radical critique for one government or society may be relatively mild for another. When a state claims a monopoly over all political thought, any criticism of the status quo by the political "outs" constitutes dissent. Dissent is not an indefinable concept. General criteria of dissidence are available and common themes emerge from dissident writings. Yet one must begin a study of political dissent by acknowledging that there is no foolproof standard for identifying such discourse. Conclusions regarding the components of dissidence are impressionistic. Again, this is not to argue that terms such as "dissent" and "dissidence" are devoid of meaning or are totally relativistic. Classification admits a degree of subjectivity and room for reasonable dispute. To recognize dissidence, one must identify certain norms established by a particular government. Since in many societies these standards are veiled and only implicit in government policy, absolute precision in defining such norms is elusive.

When a government explicitly and continually endorses certain values, however, phrases such as "political dissent" become less
slippery. Identifying dissent is easier when a government reiterates the norms upon which it is based and upon which it professes to act. This is the approach available to the student of Soviet political dissent. The Soviet regime claims to adhere to the thoughts and writings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Soviet institutions and policies are supposedly modeled on this ideology. A few generalizations regarding Soviet political dissent may now be hazarded.

First, one may say that, in the Soviet Union, dissent includes a rejection of Marxism and Leninism. The writings of these thinkers are the purported basis of the Soviet state and constitute one standard by which governmental policies are judged. Acceptance, or at least the toleration, of this ideology represents an obvious norm. Criticism of this ideological foundation is no trivial matter to the powers that be, for it strikes at the heart of the regime's raison d'etre. This may not hold for East Europe, where some communist states tolerate "revisions" or reinterpretations of the Marxist creed. But while a revisionist tradition runs through the recent political history of East Europe, the term "revisionist" remains a label of opprobrium in the Soviet Union. As such, divergence from this state-supported norm constitutes political dissent. All states assert a monopoly over legitimate violence, but the Soviet leaders covet a monopoly over acceptable social thought as well. Ideological currents other than Marxism-Leninism--religion, avant-garde art, local nationalism--are tolerated only insofar as they do not in the slightest way challenge the regime's interpretation of the official creed. No contending thoughts are granted enough autonomy to question this ideology. Persons
or groups seeking such a degree of independence are properly called 
dissidents. Any deviation from the Party line (presumably the 
embodiment of Marxism-Leninism) is thought to be dangerous. Trans­
lated literally, the Russian word for "dissident" (инакомыслящие) 
means "one who thinks differently," giving some indication of the 
pressure for conformity. 18

Secondly, those who openly object only to the regime's 
policies, without attacking the theoretical underpinnings, may also 
be called dissidents. One cannot criticize particular governmental 
actions without questioning the legitimacy of the entire regime. In 
communist thought, theory and practice are necessarily connected. 
Poor theories must lead to incorrect actions. Hence much emphasis is 
placed on ideological purity. Conversely, unsuccessful policies 
presumably indicate incorrect ideas. 19 In the leadership's eyes, one 
cannot protest the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, the jailing of 
dissidents, or the feud with China without, by implication, ques­
tioning the theoretical basis of the Soviet order. Critics of 
particular policies must be stifled before the focus of questioning 
turns toward the state's legitimacy. As Valentin Moroz, a Ukrainian 
dissident explains: "It is very important to silence the man who first 
cries out, 'the King is naked,' before others pick up the cry." 20

Criticism of Stalinism might be an exception to this 
principle, but even this has been checked as Khrushchev's successors 
have subtly rehabilitated the old vozhd. 21 One may thus apply the term 
"dissident" to anyone who criticizes specific Kremlin policies. 
Though each successive ruling group has recently denounced its
predecessor for betraying Marxism-Leninism, this type of criticism toward an existing regime is unthinkable. Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin and Brezhnev's rebukes toward Khrushchev cannot therefore be classified as dissent. Whoever rules claims that his predecessor misapplied Marxism, but he never admits the possibility that he himself might repeat the mistake. The illogic inherent in this reasoning was one reason why many communist leaders thought Khrushchev's "secret speech" to be a blunder.

Official statements of the regime offer a third way to decide who is or is not a dissident. In this respect the Kremlin is helpful to the student. Those who criticize either the regime's ideology or policies are called traitors, reactionaries, hooligans, and a host of other epithets. Individuals attempting to weather criticism by not recanting their views are vilified in Pravda and Izvestia, the Party- and state-controlled newspapers. Both publications are available to Westerners. Subversive persons are often sent to work camps, deported, confined in psychiatric prisons, or are harassed. Code words thus appear in the Soviet press and serve as signs to identify dissents.

Fourth, admissions of those who dissent supplement official pronouncements. Not only does the Soviet press consider certain persons to be dissidents, but these same people often acknowledge the radical nature of their views. That an individual considers himself a dissident is of no small significance, given the high price of such candor. Dissenters need not remain in the Soviet Union in order to retain their role. Indeed, two of the dissidents analyzed herein are
now émigrés whose deportation signifies their troublesomeness to the regime. Exile merely renders the dissident less subject to reprisal. The dialogue continues, albeit outside the Soviet Union. Exiled Czech dissident Ludek Pachman insists that banished intellectuals are not powerless since "their weapon is truth."^{22}

The dissident is conscious of his status and of the role he plays. Russian dissidents, Solzhenitsyn notes, do not oppose power with force, but rather combat injustice with reason.^{23} Solzhenitsyn places himself in the midst of the struggle. Similarly, Sakharov admits that his opinions are controversial but he accepts this as the price of frank discussion.^{24} Historian Andrei Amalrik contests the notion of gradual progress, debunking one of the regime's most cherished myths.^{25} By the personal admission of each thinker, the term "dissident" is applicable. Though the bases for dissent frequently differ, personal admissions offer a fourth criterion of dissidence.

Insistence on ideological conformity is not limited to politics. Gogol's lament that "everything is politics here" still holds true. Certain literary norms, the violation of which indicates dissidence, are espoused by the Soviet regime and enforced by its literary vicars. Writers must adhere to the canons of socialist realism. Developed by Maxim Gorky in the 1930's and codified by Andrei Zhdanov in the 1940's, socialist realism aims to describe the "New Soviet Man" produced by the socialist order. Avoiding "decadent" Western themes, socialist realism aims to describe man not only as he is now, "but also as he must be—and will be—tomorrow."^{26} Literature is
judged by a utilitarian, rather than aesthetic standard. The notion of "art for art's sake" is rejected as a vestige of bourgeois mentality. Accordingly, literary characters must express socialist values and, for instance, extol production quotas.

Creative unions are charged with the task of maintaining literary conformity. Renegade writers soon discover that their works are either excluded from or criticized in Literaturnaya Gazeta, the official organ of the Soviet Writers's Union. Another literary journal, Novy Mir, while traditionally a bit more liberal, must also accept the official norms. Most important of all is the judgement of Glavlit, the state's censorship watchdog. Writers quickly learn that certain subjects are taboo: anything presenting Czarism or the West in a favorable light; criticisms of the Party line or official versions of history; and works on disgraced personalities. Noncompliance usually results in expulsion from the Union of Soviet Writers. Publishing then becomes difficult and risky. Anyone writing samizdat material may thus be classified as a dissident. The fact that each man discussed herein has produced samizdat writings reinforces their dissident status.

The scientific realm is no different. Independent scientists who incur official ire invite various reprisals. Expulsion from the USSR Academy of Sciences is a constant threat. Dissident scientists are denied access to classified information, prevented from attending foreign scientific conferences, and are barred from travelling abroad for any reason. Publishing privileges are also revoked.

Public attitudes offer a sixth way to determine who is or is not a dissident. To most Westerners, the phrase "Soviet dissident"
brings to mind the names of Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov. Undoubtedly, the notoriety of these two men has been enhanced by Western press coverage and by their reception of various Nobel Prizes. Sakharov has long been known as "the father of the Soviet H-bomb." Amalrik's exile in 1976 received thorough press coverage in the West. Public perception is certainly not a foolproof standard. To the extent is corroborates other indications of dissidence, however, public perception is a useful measure. There are now probably few, if any, vocal dissidents who are unknown in the West. Since the writers discussed herein are considered by those both within and outside of the Soviet Union to be nonconformists, one may call these men dissidents.

Each thinker to be considered meets all of the preceding six criteria. Each man shares a questioning attitude toward Marxism-Leninism. Each man has criticized certain government policies, and each has been accordingly vilified. None of these men deny that they are dissidents and few observers would deny them this status.

**Aims and Methods**

This thesis's purpose is to compare, contrast and critique the political thought of three modern Soviet dissidents. Essentially a study in comparative political thought, this thesis will not try to identify a representative dissenter, for no one case is typical. Our purpose is to distill from writings, speeches, and interviews various political philosophies and to examine doctrinal differences among the dissidents. Analysis is limited to these three men since they are prolific, articulate, and well-known. These thinkers directly or indirectly speak to each other by addressing common themes. More than
any other dissenters, these men engage in a genuine political dialogue. Perhaps other dissenters could be examined in addition to or in place of the ones studied herein. Selection inevitably invites charges of arbitrariness. Reasonable choices must be made nevertheless, in the interests of intelligibility and manageability.

The political writings of the relevant authors will serve as the primary sources for this study. Most of these works were originally pieces of samizdat. Other volumes, such as Solzhenitsyn's Warning to the West, encompass dissenting views which exile has not silenced. Most of the writings of Sakharov and Amalrik directly address political themes.

Solzhenitsyn, of course, is a prolific novelist as well. This presents no major problem since particular fictional works may shed light on Solzhenitsyn's political thought. This task is not accomplished by matching a fictional character to an author's presumed sentiment. Taken in their entirety, Solzhenitsyn's novels and plays supplement the political themes offered in his more polemical works. Instead of trying to guess which character speaks for the author, the serious student can find in Solzhenitsyn's fiction many themes relevant to political thought: the problem of moral choice; the proper aims of government; and the role of ideology and values, for example.

Solzhenitsyn encourages attempts to seek political insights in his literature. In a 1967 interview with the Czech correspondent Pavel Licko, Solzhenitsyn stated that

... by intuition and by his singular vision of
the world, a writer is able to discover far earlier than other people aspects of social life and can often see them from an unexpected angle. . . It is incumbent upon the writer to inform society of all that he is able to perceive and especially all that is unhealthy and cause for anxiety.  

Nearly a decade later, this view is unchanged.

To fight against untruth and falsehood, to fight against an ideology which is hostile to mankind, to fight for our memory of what things were like—that is the task of the artist.  

Harvard’s Adam Ulam argues that many of the ideas expressed in Solzhenitsyn's political tracts are developed thematically in the dissident's literature as well.  

Most Westerners indiscriminantly lump all Soviet dissidents together, ignoring important differences between them. This conventional view is unrealistic, as this thesis will try to prove. The early 1970's were unique for Soviet society as various dissidents began to debate about their country's future. But Solzhenitsyn's sudden exile probably overshadowed the significance of this dialogue. Herein lies one cause of the popular misconception regarding a monolithic dissident movement. Uncovering (but not exaggerating) points of dissonance within the dissident movement is this thesis's aim.

**Hypotheses and Categories**

We may now consider some bases for comparison between dissident political theories. Intellectual freedom is an obvious starting point. Predictably, a dissident will desire an increased amount of intellectual license and expression. One is justified in questioning the reasons underlying this view. How do dissidents analyze the tension between the one and the many in a political
society? Are dissidents willing to limit the claims of either? What assumptions undergird this desire for personal freedom? Can the present role of the Communist Party be reconciled with more artistic autonomy? What exactly is meant by the phrase, "intellectual freedom"? The topic of personal liberty must be discussed if the concept of dissidence has any meaning.

A related topic worthy of treatment is the legitimacy of the Soviet regime. As has been noted, opposition to the official ideology is a key component of dissidence. Presumably, each dissident harbors views which vary from the Party line. Why do these men object to the Soviet political system? Does their criticism reveal its own ideological perspective? Are objections rooted in particular policies or do they extend to an abhorrence of the regime's ideology? Are these men evolutionists, reformers, or revolutionaries? Is a multiparty political system desirable? Do dissidents distinguish between Russian and Soviet national attributes? Answers to these questions will be examined and critiqued.

In his essay on man in revolt, Albert Camus argued that rebellion necessarily involves both negation and affirmation. The rebel says "no" to the old order and "yes" to a new vision. Thus, if one discovers dissension within Soviet society, one must also seek some alternative to the past. Criticism of the Soviet regime is thus inseparable from the issue of Russia's future. What would dissidents put in the place of the present Soviet structure? Do they even offer an alternate vision? Are such visions realistic or utopian? Do these models have any substantive faults of their own? What might be some
practical consequences of these schemes? Does Russia bear a special mission among the family of nations?

The Stalin era also deserves special attention. "Stalinism" refers to the brand of Soviet communism practiced during Stalin's rule from 1928 to 1953. Features characterizing this rule include agricultural collectivization, an emphasis on heavy industry, extensive use of terror to achieve political ends, and authoritarian and personalized rule. All of the dissidents to be analyzed lived through some part of the Stalin period. In many cases, the experience was nothing short of traumatic. An indication of Stalinism's importance to dissidents is the amount of energy they devote to its discussion. One may thus justifiably examine the dialogue surrounding Stalin. Does Stalin merit the suffix "ism"? Why do dissidents single out Stalin's rule for special criticism? Is Stalinism a perversion of humane Marxism or the predictable product of an intolerant and hate-filled ideology? Does Stalinism offer any legacy? Does the end of Stalinism portend any liberalization of domestic policies?

Equally pertinent is the role of the intelligentsia in the Soviet Union. Modern Russian history has produced a series of intellectuals possessing a special sense of noblesse oblige. Dating from the abortive "back to the people" or Narodnik movement of the late 19th century, the Russian intellectual has tried to represent the conscience of the masses. A deep sense of commitment to the common people has characterized this class's thinking. The intelligentsia's tradition is thus closely linked to the theme of Russian populism. Intellectuals have sensed for themselves a special mission of responsibility.
While Lenin envisioned the Party as serving as the vanguard of the proletariat, the intelligentsia historically has seen itself as the vanguard of all the common folk, not just the industrial workers. Membership in the intelligentsia is largely a matter of self-identification. The term usually includes scholars, artists, and students. One may thus ask whether modern dissidents, ostensible members of the intelligentsia, envisage any special role for themselves in reforming the status quo.

In turn, one may examine how these dissidents view the West. Russian political thought has traditionally exhibited a love-hate attitude toward the West. Periodic swings between an admiration for and an aversion toward the West reflect this almost schizophrenic trait. Some Russians have viewed the West as a progressive society, the standard by which Russian endeavors are measured. Other Russian thinkers have equated the West with decadence and disorder. In the late 19th century, the tension between these perspectives polarized the intelligentsia into factions representing Slavophilism and Westernization. The dissident's views of the West are important, for they sustain a prominent theme in Russian intellectual history. How do the dissidents view the West? Is the West a model, a mirror-image, or a warning to Russia? Does the West play any role in dissident schemes for Soviet liberalization? Do the dissidents fall into the classic molds of Slavophilism and Westernization? Since two of the dissidents are now emigres living in the West, the changes in their views regarding the occidental world are also notable.

Additionally, the issue of East-West relations is important
since these relations have global, not merely regional repercussions. Certain questions must be asked. What do these dissidents see as the optimal relationship between the Soviet Union and the Western world? Do they suggest returning to a more confrontationist or Cold War policy? Do dissidents favor the policy of détente? Do they support a more comprehensive partnership, or entente, with the West? Is Russia's salvation to be found in introspection or in greater involvement with the world community? What bearing does the West's future have on Russian political development? Do any historical or natural ties link the Soviet Union and the United States? How might the Sino-Soviet rift affect Russia's future?

Perhaps other categories will develop in the course of research. No effort will be made to force a thinker into a pre-existing category if such a classification is unwarranted. Examples of political opposition in the Soviet Union have been so rare that the modern dissident dialogue bears importance that transcends the contemporary. The dialogue represents a reoccurring phenomenon in Russian intellectual history. One may now question Dahl's classification of the Soviet Union as a "pure hegemony"\(^10\) and accept Barghoorn's references to a "subversive opposition."\(^11\) A political countertradition survives, often at its own peril, within the Soviet Union. The dissident movement is much more variegated than most Westerners care to admit. United by some common values, Soviet dissidents nevertheless exhibit some doctrinal discord within their own ranks. It is thus appropriate to begin our study with perhaps the most controversial and seminal dissident—Alexander Isaevich Solzhenitsyn.
NOTES TO CHAPTER I


NOTES TO CHAPTER I (continued)

15 Tokes, p. 30.


17 Ibid.


20 Smith, p. 439.

21 A Vozhd is a strong, tough leader. The term was applied to Stalin so frequently that it is now almost synonymous with his name.


27 Kaiser, p. 391.

28 Ibid., p. 396.

29 Armstrong, p. xv.


31 Kulturny Zhivot (Bratislava), 31 March 1967, pp. 1-10.

32 Solzhenitsyn, p. 112.
NOTES TO CHAPTER I (continued)


34 Smith, p. 439.


36 Carew Hunt, p. 163.

37 Armstrong, p. 13.

38 Ibid., p. 16

39 Carew Hunt, p. 159.

40 Dahl, p. 6.

41 Barghoorn, p. 54.
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Kulturny Zhivot (Bratislava), 31 March 1967, pp. 1-10.


CHAPTER II

SOLZHENITSYN: POLITICS OF SUFFERING AND LIMITATION

Frequently praised, selectively read, Alexander Solzhenitsyn remains an enigma to many Westerners. Self-styled conservatives hail him as a symbol of freedom. Fashionable liberals view him merely as an anachronism or a primitive reactionary. Without doubt, the West has tended to suppress those political ideas of Solzhenitsyn deemed embarrassing to conventional thought.¹ Thus have his political views been dismissed as the rantings of an unbalanced anti-communist or as the nostrums of a gifted author but naive political analyst. Yet these claims are as dangerous as they are false. Instead, our thesis is that Alexander Solzhenitsyn, as a Soviet dissident and Russian émigré, is a profound political theorist. Our aim is not to pigeonhole Solzhenitsyn into some ideological niche, but to identify, discuss, and evaluate the most prominent political themes in his writings. No one chapter, thesis, or book could exhaustively represent the breadth of his vision. Nor does any definitive interpretation of his philosophy exist. Serious consideration of Solzhenitsyn the political thinker is long overdue and is the task undertaken in the following pages. In his writings, Solzhenitsyn offers a political vision that is both timeless and timely.

Support for our view that Solzhenitsyn is a profound political thinker in his own right lies in analyzing his speeches and writings.

²⁵
Let us begin, therefore, by discussing the subject that is Solzhenitsyn's interest, life and, if you will, obsession.

**Soviet Tyranny**

Solzhenitsyn examines the Soviet political system at many levels, starting with its theoretical basis.

**Marxism**

Though he was once a devout Marxist, Solzhenitsyn now has nothing but contempt for this philosophy. He believes that Marxism, as a predictive tool, is useless. Contrary to Marx's prophecies, those nations that are most underdeveloped are most susceptible to upheaval. Highly developed societies, presumably the most fertile grounds for revolution, have been largely free of proletarian unrest. Moreover, in those underdeveloped nations that have experienced revolution, the crises have not been caused by worker grievances. The Russian Bolshevik coup was led, not by the alienated industrial laborers, but by selected members of the intelligentsia and the petit-bourgeoisie. Industrial workers played virtually no role in Mao's peasant revolution. Marx's prediction has been stood on its head, has failed the test of historical experience, yet the ideology still insists on somehow being "scientific."

Aside from this, Solzhenitsyn sees Marxism as a reductionist theory which purports to explain the complexity of human life using the one factor of economics. But not everything in life is determined by material conditions or by the relationship between labor and ownership. Impulse, irrationality, ideals--these elements are as
important as economic causes in shaping history. Marxism claims to offer the one and only definitive analysis of history. Solzhenitsyn punctures this pretension. In Cancer Ward, Solzhenitsyn's alter ego, Oleg Kostoglotov says that "nothing is decided once and for all, for life would then cease." This is a rebuff, not just to the pretensions of the Russian Revolution, but to the "definitive" presumptions of Marxist thought.

Marx's analysis of society in terms of economic classes also draws fire from Solzhenitsyn. Persons from certain backgrounds are "objectively" bourgeois. Corruption is a vestige of bourgeois mentality. Not only is this an absurd generalization, Solzhenitsyn thinks, but it smacks of racism as well. The dictatorship of the proletariat must liquidate whole classes, even if they offer no apparent threat, because they are "objectively" hostile. Like the Christian theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, Solzhenitsyn argues that evil is not distributed along class lines. Again in Cancer Ward, Kostoglotov tells a young communist that "there were greedy people before the bourgeoisie and there'll be greedy people after the bourgeoisie."

In the Marxist scheme, the capitalist worker is alienated and exploited because he does not own the means of production. Alienation includes a feeling of purposelessness in work, an inability to see any meaning in labor, the feeling of being a tiny cog in a vast machine. But in his novels, Solzhenitsyn implies that worker alienation does not result from a lack of ownership. For instance, in One Day in the Life Ivan Denisovich (hereafter referred to as One Day), Shukov and Kilgas
take pride in and find meaning in their work. Both men are prisoners; one is a carpenter, the other a bricklayer. Neither one owns his tools or receives the fruits of his labor. But together, these men give their work much value and esteem skill in labor for its own sake. Even when workers theoretically own the means of production, as they are told in the Soviet Union, alienation abounds. In his short story For the Good of the Cause, Solzhenitsyn explains how builders constructing a research institute could not care less about the quality of their work. Man must impart his own meaning to work, for such meaning does not magically appear once the proletariat owns the means of production. Alienation, Solzhenitsyn implies, is less a function of ownership than of self-esteem.

But Marxism's fundamental flaw, according to Solzhenitsyn, is that it is anti-human. Marxism is based on hate, hate for any class that is "objectively" harmful. Whole classes are forced to bear the guilt of a few individuals. Thus does Solzhenitsyn disdain the word "anti-communist," since to be against Marxism or communism (to him they are synonymous) is to be for humanity. To reject this creed is only to be human. In Solzhenitsyn's view, Marxism approves of any act, as long as it is "for the good of the cause." Marx rejects capitalism, not because it violates some transcendant value of justice or virtue, but simply because the majority is the exploited and not the exploitative class. In its endorsement of majority tyranny, Marxism is a pernicious dogma, Solzhenitsyn believes.6

Solzhenitsyn also thinks that Marxism is a closed system. It sees all, knows all, explains all. Arguments do not affect it since it
has decided in advance that anyone rejecting the creed is a reactionary and should therefore not be heard. In prison trucks, Solzhenitsyn debated with some imprisoned but true-believing Marxists. Each one, he recalls, advanced the same argument in the same words at the very same point. Solzhenitsyn kept his sanity only by reminding himself that it was just a game and that he stood no chance of changing the dogmatists's minds. As an ideology, Marxism is heretically sealed against all contending thought. Marxist reasoning, Solzhenitsyn believes, is impenetrable and the Marxist convert imperturable.

It is no coincidence to Solzhenitsyn that the world's largest police state claims Marxism as its foundation. Forget all the talk about "Marxism with a human face," Solzhenitsyn urges, for no such thing exists. Did not Marx and Engels refer to the dictatorship of the proletariat? Under this new dictatorship (a dictatorship sanctified since it is one of the majority over the minority), how could one possibly dispense with an army, a secret police, or a prison system? The roots of the Gulag are easily traced back to Marx, Solzhenitsyn argues. For example, in his Critique of the Gotha Programme, Marx concludes that under the proletarian dictatorship (Marx's phrase), prisoners should not be deprived "of their only means of improvement, productive labor." This same rationale was later used by Soviet authorities to establish slave labor camps in Siberia and the Arctic Circle. Even the classless society is evidently not without its coercive organs.

This may be a misreading of Marx on Solzhenitsyn's part, but no interpreter of Marx holds a monopoly over truth. Like the
Scriptures, Marx can often be quoted against himself. Too often the
debate surrounding Marx has pitted dogmatist against dogmatist--those
who see only humaneness in the man versus those who see in Marx only
the budding flowers of evil. Solzhenitsyn's interpretation of Marx may
be mistaken, but it is not without some support. Consider, for
instance, the view of R. N. Carew Hunt, one who is familiar with all of
Marx's works and who has no axe to grind.

The "one-party system," which is certainly alien to
Western democratic thought, follows [from Marxism] as a
corollary. For Marxists argue that opposing political
parties derive from the conflict between different eco­
nomic classes, and that once their cause is removed they
will cease to exist. It is no more necessary that there
should be two political parties than that a man should
have two heads.†

Certainly no writer can be held responsible for every crime
that his writings are posthumously used to justify. But in Marx's
case this has not been a sporadic occurrence. Beyond a certain point,
one must ask why Marxism is the frequent justification for so-called
"peoples democracies." Is it really coincidental that leftist police
states clothe their actions in Marxist garb? Why always Marxism? Why
have most of the humane Marxist visions remained on paper only?

No, Solzhenitsyn prefers to judge Marxism on its practice, not
on its theory, on its track record, not on its more scholarly exegesis.
He has little patience with the scores of Marxian scholars who, like
ancient augurs divining Truth from bird entrails, claim to know the
real Marx. Perhaps he is so embittered by the cruelty he has suffered
from his own country that he is blind to the real possibility of hu­
mane socialism. Ironically, while many Marxian scholars are sure that
humane socialism is quite possible despite its rarity in practice,
they refuse to consider the possibility of capitalism with a human face. Again, Solzhenitsyn may be mistaken in his view of Marxism, but it will take more than a "Prague Spring" or the existence of a second party in South Yemen to prove him wrong.

To Solzhenitsyn, Soviet tyranny is not a perverted interpretation of an essentially humane body of thought. Rather, the Soviet system is the predictable product of an intolerant, value-free, and hate-filled ideology. Marxist ideology is the "fetid root" of this tyranny. As Raymond Aron notes, Solzhenitsyn views Marxism as "the root of all ill, the source of all falsehood, the principle of evil."

**Lenin's Legacy**

To those who remember Lenin's rule as being relatively benign, Solzhenitsyn offers harsh words. For him, Lenin only produced an even more intolerant and hateful interpretation of Marxism. Neo-Leninists who criticize Stalin's harshness thus defend an untenable argument. In his reconstruction of Lenin's émigré years, Solzhenitsyn explores other sources of Soviet intolerance. We learn from Lenin in Zurich that Vladimir Illych never forgave mistakes, never countenanced any opposition, and always judged individuals as tools to further his own cause. Lenin was contemptuous of most people: "The majority is always stupid, and we cannot wait for it." Nor was Lenin's brand of communism much more compassionate than his successor's. Solzhenitsyn points to Lenin's 1908 tract, *The Lessons of the Paris Commune*. Lenin believed that the abortive commune made two major errors: first,
it did not seize the banks; and second, it was too lenient. "Instead of shooting the hostile classes wholesale, it spared their lives, imagining it could re-educate them." If Stalin is the main evil in Cancer Ward and The First Circle, Lenin is portrayed as the chief villain in The Gulag Archipelago. If Stalin's atrocities dwarfed Lenin's, this was only because Lenin died before he could consolidate the already growing system of terror.

In passing, it should be noted that Solzhenitsyn's view of Lenin and Stalin is a minority opinion, one which many scholars (along with this writer) would dispute. We will deal with Solzhenitsyn's argument more thoroughly in the next chapter, when we compare his view with Sakharov's.

The Stalinist Myth

There never was any such thing as Stalinism, Solzhenitsyn believes. Stalin was a faithful disciple of Lenin in all important respects. Stalin only implemented on a grand scale what Lenin intended all along. Leninism, Stalinism—to Solzhenitsyn there is no difference. Stalin collectivized land and murdered peasants? Lenin, by way of the 1922 Land Code, started this process. Stalin oppressed nationalities and enslaved other peoples? Lenin used the Red Army to crush national resistance in the Transcaucasus, Central Asia, and the Baltic states. Stalin instituted forced labor, the secret police, and religious oppression? Lenin started the first work camps, created the Cheka (the first secret police), and plundered the Church. Stalin seized private property? Lenin did the same thing in Tambov and Siberia. Stalin
sacrificed everything to heavy industry? It was Lenin who urged rapid-industrialization and who starved light industry.  

As a distinctive style of rule, Stalinism never existed. Solzhenitsyn thinks the myth of Stalinism is a ploy created by Khrushchevites to legitimate their own rule and by pseudo-dissidents (he places the historian Roy Medvedev in this group) to soothe their own consciences. Stalin's cruelty, which made Ivan the Terrible look like a merry old soul, was Lenin's brainchild. Stalin was no freak. His crimes cannot be passed off as some "cult of the individual" or as "violations of socialist legality." Stalinism is a system which preceded and survived the life of its namesake. As we learn in One Day, the slave camps were not isolated phenomena, but were microcosms of Soviet society as a whole. Not surprisingly, those who now praise Stalin (occasionally the Chinese, frequently the Albanians) are those who felt his knout the least.

The Soviet System

It would be mistaken to see in Solzhenitsyn's works an exaltation of Czarism. Yet comparisons between the old order and the Soviet system abound. In comparing the two systems, Solzhenitsyn believes that the new order finishes a poor second. Compared to Soviet rule, Czarism was infinitely humane. The number of men in Czarist prisons is dwarfed by the millions who languish in the Gulag. Soviet prisons make the Czarist facilities look like resort areas. The lowest serf in the Czarist hierarchy had much more freedom than the modern Soviet citizen. In many ways, Solzhenitsyn favorably compares the ancien régime to the new order.
Of course, in terms of material wealth, Solzhenitsyn recognizes Soviet superiority. But he is quick to ask: "At what cost?" The fact is that material abundance is built on a foundation of exploitation. Soviet society has paid for its affluence with unparalleled human suffering. Ironically, the prisoners in One Day are busy constructing a Socialist Community Development. Barbed wire rings the complex to thwart escape. To build socialism, entire classes are liquidated, not because they are in fact guilty of any crime, but because they are "objective class enemies." Ivan Denisovich is a criminal because he escaped from the Germans during World War II. Tyurin, another prisoner, is punished for being the son of a kulak (a prosperous peasant). Others are imprisoned because they are Christian (evidence of ideological subversion) or because they are Estonian (evidence of bourgeois nationalism). Citing the figures of Ivan Kurganov, an émigré statistics expert, Solzhenitsyn claims that from 1917 to 1959, internal repression cost 66 million Soviet citizens their lives.

The system's real crime, according to Solzhenitsyn, is that it enslaves men's minds. Citizens grow so accustomed to conformity that they lose their taste for freedom. In One Day, prison conditions are often better than life "outside." In prison, one can say things that are forbidden in "freedom." The police state atmosphere transcends the prison, engulfing all of society. Ivan Denisovich had been in prison for so long that "he didn't know any longer himself whether he wanted freedom or not." Constant pressure for conformity thus produces mass apathy, enslaving men's energies and minds.
Myth contrasts starkly with reality. Under the rule of the proletariat, workers cannot protest low wages or squalid living conditions. While the interest of the collective is supposedly predominant, self-interest remains the guiding force in the lives of all. Corruption and deceit make the system work. Industrial production soars, but production figures are padded. Automation progresses, but manual labor and inefficiency is common. Official propaganda extols the People, but the system cannot stand real people. In Cancer Ward, Pavel Rusanov, a Party bureaucrat, loves people only in the abstract.

The Rusanovs loved the People, their great People. They served the People and were ready to give their lives for the People. But as the years went by they found themselves less able to tolerate actual human beings, those obstinate creatures who are always resistant, refusing to do what they are told.

Such a contrast between myth and reality gives rise to the Big Lie. The system requires active participation in the Big Lie. If a colleague is arrested, one must denounce him and renounce friendship. If production quotas are to be met, output must be falsified. To avoid personal suspicion, one must become an informer. And if there is nothing to report, one must invent charges. The Big Lie becomes a daily habit, for few can survive without it. In Soviet society, millions must be enslaved for the sake of freedom, privileges must be established for the sake of equality, and lies must be told in order to preserve truth. Such is the essence of ideology, Solzhenitsyn argues. Physical enslavement is one of the least onerous aspects of the system. Participation in the Big Lie is mandatory. Herein lies the modern tragedy.
Nor is any voluntary liberalization likely. Securely entrenched at all levels of society are "little Stalins"—petty bureaucrats who love to play the role of the tyrant. In the story, For the Good of the Cause, Knorozov remains a proponent of the "strong-willed school of leadership" long after Stalin's death. That darling of socialist realism, the New Soviet Man, cuts a pathetic figure. As a New Man, Rusanov in Cancer Ward trembles at the thought of facing old political foes. Without the state's backing, he is a coward. Solzhenitsyn recalls that in the Gulag, imprisoned Party loyalists called themselves revolutionaries, but were the first ones to submit to authority. As Thorstein Veblen satirized the 19th century leisure class, supposedly the "fittest" of society, so does Solzhenitsyn ridicule the myth of the New Soviet Man.

Instead of a New Man, all that is really produced is a new class. Where once the private capitalists exploited the masses, now this is done by the state and Party. In one case the exploitation is unjustified, in the other it is exalted. As Milovan Djilas explained in his book, The New Class, the toiling masses have merely traded in one type of master for another. State capitalism now exploits where private capitalism once flourished. A new and privileged class has arisen and it is this class, not the worker, which controls the means of production. In Cancer Ward, Rusanov is emblematic of the new class, enjoying special housing and consumption privileges. No one remembers the egalitarian ideals which inspired the October Revolution and which were expressed in Lenin's April Theses. From the ancien régime to the present, little has changed. Before, exploitation was
called exploitation. Now, it is called "the progressive will of the masses." Under capitalism, man exploits man. Under Soviet socialism, it is the other way around. Granted, Marx too inveighed against state capitalism. But this disclaimer can hardly be reconciled with the idea of a proletarian dictatorship, the transitional period of socialism in which a strong state remains.

Solzhenitsyn holds out little hope for voluntary internal reform. The Soviet system is intolerant, closed to criticism, and inflexible. Mistakes are not admitted, and hence problems are veiled but never solved. As long as any disagreement is treated as ideological subversion, Solzhenitsyn maintains, the Soviet system will not adapt to new problems and changing conditions. To borrow a concept from Marxist thought, the Soviet system will succumb to its own internal contradictions. Inflexibility is rooted in the official ideology, itself a closed and intolerant creed. Solzhenitsyn views the Soviet system with a mixture of bitterness and pity. He has no illusions of easily changing the system, but he has not abandoned all hope of reform.

If Vladimir Petrov was correct in 1962 in asserting that "Solzhenitsyn remained a loyal and patriotic Soviet citizen," this verdict was clearly outdated by 1970. Perhaps as Solzhenitsyn grew increasingly pessimistic regarding the prospects for Soviet reform, his literature became more daring. But there is another way to view this development. Importantly, The Gulag Archipelago reflects not only Solzhenitsyn's present bitterness but conclusions that he reached almost 30 years ago in prison. Perhaps Solzhenitsyn was never really a
"loyal and patriotic Soviet citizen" but rather used each successive literary work to test the water, to see how much he could get by with. With each work, he perhaps felt less compelled to mask his true beliefs. With One Day, he learns that he may express oblique criticisms. With Cancer Ward, he ventures some near-heresies. The Gulag Archipelago represents the final blasphemy which has been fermenting for many years but which only now finds open expression. Thus, while Petrov may have been correct in 1962, insights offered by The Gulag Archipelago undermine his view. In any event, Solzhenitsyn does not view the Soviet problem in historical isolation. Rather, he sees the Soviet tragedy as one manifestation of a larger and more pernicious force which shapes our age.

**Ideology**

One might think that in a century that produced Dachau, Auschwitz, and the Gulag, the following discussion would be superfluous. Yet for Solzhenitsyn, the topic of ideology occupies a central area of political thought. Though Solzhenitsyn offers no specific definition of ideology, it is clear what he has in mind. To him, an ideology is a set of beliefs that claims to explain reality and to prescribe a way to transform man and society toward some goal.

Solzhenitsyn claims to be skeptical of all ideologies, not just Marxism. Our century has seen unparalleled suffering, he believes, precisely because of ideology. Ideological wars (he includes religious crusades here) have consistently been the cruellest. Ideology is a vestige of man's bestial origins. Primitive emotions such as envy, greed, and hate now surface in the guise of the class, mass and race
struggle. With its grandiose vision of re-making man and society for the sake of an indefinite but utopian future, ideology justifies all injustice. To Solzhenitsyn, ideology has consistently excused evil and dehumanization. Ideology is fancy rationalization. It is a procrustean bed, destroying all those who do not fit into its plans. Men are readily sacrificed for the sake of lofty goals. Thus, ideology must treat man as an instrument, not as an end in himself. Ideology detaches men from moral responsibility, giving the criminal a clear conscience. It is ideology which not only crushes man, but demands that he embrace and praise his tormentors.

The nature of man is fortunately such that he must seek a justification for his actions. Macbeth's justifications were feeble and his conscience tormented him. Iago too was a mere lamb. The imagination and resources of Shakespeare's villains did not carry them beyond the first dozen corpses. For they lacked Ideology.

Ideology! This is what gives the evil deed its sought-for justification and the villain the lasting callousness he needs. This is the social theory which helps him vindicate his deeds in his own eyes and those of others, to hear not reproaches and curses, but praise and honor. This did the inquisitors draw strength from Christianity, the conquerers from the exaltation of the motherland, the colonizers from civilization, the Nazis from race, the Jacobins (both early and late) from equality, fraternity and the happiness of future generations.

Thanks to Ideology it was given to the twentieth century to experience atrocity to the millionth power. Ideology thus obscures the human costs of political action, asking men to ignore all restraints for the sake of a hazy and future nirvana.

The growth of ideology reflects, in part, the growing politicization of life. When societal problems arise, men first look to governments for solutions. Solzhenitsyn inveighs against this tendency. Though religion is on the defensive in a secular and cynical
age, ideology allows men to function with a religious intensity. But politics is not religion, Solzhenitsyn reminds us, and there is much to life that politics alone cannot transform. Ideology, Solzhenitsyn argues, assumes an unrealistically high degree of human and societal malleability. This obsession with political solutions is, in the long run, an unhealthy sign. Ideology thus rests on an illusion, the illusion that man and society can be changed at a single stroke.

Ideology becomes most pernicious when it combines with absolute power. Then, oppression reaches its peak. But for Solzhenitsyn, authoritarianism per se is not reprehensible. As long as the system does not demand adherence to some ideology, Solzhenitsyn approves of authoritarianism. As long as there is some sense of limitation in politics, tyranny is unlikely. By renouncing limits, by applauding any act that advances the cause, modern ideology sweeps away those restraints previously imposed by morals and laws.

Ends and means thus become inextricable. Ideology tries to separate them, arguing that future perfection (be it the Third Reich or the classless society) sanctifies all means. In rejecting ideology, Solzhenitsyn is not saying that there is nothing more precious than life. Rather, he believes that it is senseless to die for some indeterminate future utopia which may never materialize. Ends and means are inseparable. In the First Circle, Sologdin engages Lev Rubin, an imprisoned communist, in a philosophical debate. Naturally, Rubin argues that the progressive march of history justifies any action, that concepts such as good and evil are thoroughly bourgeois. Sologdin retorts that "the higher the ends, the higher must be the means! Dishonest means destroy
the ends themselves.\textsuperscript{16} In other words, the means must ennoble the ends. Unjust means tend to acquire a momentum of their own, becoming entrenched and obscuring the original humane aims. There is no reason why ends and means should be judged by entirely different ethical standards. In judging political action, therefore, intentions are only marginally relevant. One must also consider the consequences of method. Solzhenitsyn summarizes in the second volume of \textit{The Gulag Archipelago} the lesson prison taught him:

\begin{quote}
It is not the result that counts! It is not the result— but the spirit! Not what—but how. Not what has been attained— but at what price.\textsuperscript{47}
\end{quote}

There are many worthwhile values, Solzhenitsyn implies, only one of which is utopia. To Solzhenitsyn, the ideologue is the monomaniac, eager to trample on many other cherished values in his rush toward future perfection. This is not a call for conservatism, but rather an ethical standard of political prudence. Though Solzhenitsyn opposes ideology, he certainly does not resist all change.

\textbf{The Problem of Change}

\textbf{Revolution as Illusion}

Solzhenitsyn is skeptical, not of all change, but of all revolutions. To him, revolutions seldom accomplish much good and nearly always do much evil. Revolutions destroy only the most obvious symptoms of injustice.\textsuperscript{48} Often, in passion and haste, revolutions destroy institutions worth preserving. Once violence is sanctioned, it knows few limits. Revolutions rarely improve societies. In obliterating old forms of injustice, revolutions often spawn their own unjust policies.\textsuperscript{49}
The Bolshevik Revolution is a prime example in Solzhenitsyn's argument. The subsequent variations are predictable: A disciplined group seizes power in a bloody struggle; the People's Republic is proclaimed; old enemies are killed or imprisoned, contending parties banned, land redistributed, industries nationalized, and conformity enforced; everyone settles in to await the withering away of the state, which somehow never occurs.

By establishing a precedent of violence, revolutions usually fulfil few of their aims and thereby give birth to insecure regimes. Solzhenitsyn does not call for a revolution against Soviet tyranny. He embraces no ideology. He does not want to add yet another "ism" to the growing list. Within societies, however, the problem of change must be handled at an individual level. Each man must look within himself, establish his values, and resist dehumanization. Introspection, not revolution, is the sane course, Solzhenitsyn believes. It does not guarantee bliss, but the history of most revolutions is a tale of shattered hopes. Some values, and not just any values, must underly change. These values may be found, not through mobilizing the masses, but through individual contemplation.

Suffering and Denial

Since few men undertake such contemplation voluntarily, some external force usually prompts the process. In Solzhenitsyn's case, this external force was arrest and imprisonment. Suffering forces one to re-examine one's life and to recover a sense of ethical responsibility. Only with the aid of "external violence" will man forgo his
egocentric habits. Suffering is a catharsis which purifies the soul and instills values. What slavery was to Cervantes and hard labor was to Dostoevsky, the Gulag travail was to Solzhenitsyn. In retrospect, Solzhenitsyn believes that prison was a beneficial experience. Even now he can write, "Bless you, prison!" In his play Candle in the Wind, Alex expresses the same sentiment after serving a nine-year term in a fictitious Desert Caledonia. To Solzhenitsyn, for both individuals and nations, there is an inverse relationship between affluence and spiritual development. Alex, in the above-mentioned play, claims that "suffering is a lever for the growth of the soul. A contented person always has an impoverished soul."

Just as suffering is often beneficial for individuals, so are defeats good for entire nations. Successes cause nations to seek empires. Defeats force introspection and spiritual growth. Russia's victory over Napoleon, Solzhenitsyn argues, forestalled internal reform for at least 25 years. Defeats in the Crimean War, the Russo-Japanese War and the First World War prompted Russian liberalization. National complacency breeds moral nihilism and a preoccupation with comfort over all else. Thus is material wealth purchased at the cost of human values. Juxtaposed with affluence, Solzhenitsyn advocates asceticism.

Own nothing! Possess nothing! Buddha and Christ taught us this, and the Stoics and Cynics. Greedy though we are, why can's we seem to grasp that simple teaching? Can't we understand that with property we destroy our soul?

Possessions only subject one to the state's leverage. He who owns little is beyond the state's grasp. Beneficial change will not
result from some glorious revolution, but rather from a renunciation of materialism in favor of spiritual improvement.

The Intelligentsia

In Solzhenitsyn's political thought, the intelligentsia serves as a vehicle for change. But he strives to clarify the term's meaning. In the Soviet Union, the word "intelligentsia" has become so debased as to include any and all white collar workers—bureaucrats, bookkeepers and clerks. The term is now applied to so many people that it has lost all meaning. Posited against this usage, Solzhenitsyn offers a different definition. For him, an intellectual is not defined by class, occupation, or family background. Instead, an intellectual is one who is preoccupied with the ethical and spiritual aspects of life.

Interestingly, Solzhenitsyn never mentions intelligence. No matter how brilliant or articulate, a person who eschews value judgments is not an intellectual in Solzhenitsyn's lexicon. Moreover, the true intellectual does not hesitate to flout convention for the sake of his values. The intelligent, for Solzhenitsyn, is inner-directed and non-imitative in thought.

At one time, Solzhenitsyn had high hopes for the intelligentsia's ability to reform society. He is less sanguine now, believing that there are certain things one must experience in order to learn. But neither is Solzhenitsyn totally without hope. He still views the intelligentsia as the conscience (not so much the intellect) of society. In this respect he resembles the 19th century Russian intellectual. Comparisons should not be overdrawn, however, since
Solzhenitsyn criticizes this group for having an over-romanticized view of the common people. Though he is no elitist. Solzhenitsyn dismisses the unrealistic populism he detects in Gogol and Herzen. Solzhenitsyn is nevertheless obsessed with a special sense of mission. He is the collective memory of those who have suffered. If only all Soviet citizens could read his *Gulag Archipelago*, they would renounce communism.\(^{59}\) His mission is to speak the truth, even if it is unwelcome, embarrassing, and unfashionable. Solzhenitsyn occasionally exhibits a classic liberal faith in the power of education (in this case a moral education) to improve man and society. Central to his thought, therefore, is the idea that change and growth are not primarily political problems.

**The Limits of Politics**

**The Transcendence of Politics**

When Solzhenitsyn thinks of politics, he thinks of political parties. Though he would not ban political parties, he does believe they are very dispensable. By their nature, parties place their own interests above the common good. In a competitive situation, a party must rejoice in the ruling faction's defeats and bemoan their successes, even if these respective results frustrate or advance the common good. For this reason Solzhenitsyn does not advocate a multiparty parliamentary system for Russia. Rather, he seeks an "extraparty" or "nonparty" system where a consensus regarding the common good transcends partisanship.\(^{60}\) On this point he differs with Andrei Sakharov.

Neither is freedom mainly a political problem. Men can be given
all types of freedom; indeed, the Soviet Constitution grants nearly
every imaginable kind of freedom. Yet as long as men grow submissive
and lose their zest for freedom, codifying rights will be all for naught.
Resistance to conformity is a matter of individual integrity, and no law
can impart this quality. The obsession with political freedom—voting
rights, ability to form parties, freedom of expression—is harmful to
the extent to distracts men from the central task: committing oneself
against the Big Lie, regardless of the consequences.

Similarly, equality is a moral, not political, problem. Only
when men abandon materialism and the lust for comfort will true equality
be possible. Until that time, no matter how much income governments
try to redistribute, an elite stratum will remain. In such a way does
Solzhenitsyn's call for asceticism highlight his belief in the limi-
tation of political solutions. He recognizes that government is a
blunt instrument, but that most people still look toward government
action as a panacea. The state's structure—authoritarian or demo-
ocratic—is of only secondary importance to Solzhenitsyn. What matters
most is that a nation posses moral strength. Solzhenitsyn thus stresses
the primacy of individual commitment over mass political action.

The Ethics of Accountability

Not everyone need endure prison in order to recover a sense of
values. Each nation and each citizen bears some responsibility for the
injustice committed in their names. No one is guiltless and moral
neutralty is a façade for collaboration. In a society dominated by the
Big Lie, each man is a potential tyrant. The secret police informer
is no monster; he appears to be a normal human being. Even Solzhe-
nitsyn just barely avoided enlisting in the ranks of the secret police.
Solzhenitsyn echoes Hannah Arendt's views on "the banality of evil." Each person who refuses to stand up to unjust authority contributes in some small way to the web of repression. Those who torture, slander, and spy are not ghouls, but seemingly ordinary people who would rather obey than think. With accountability goes responsibility. Aware of the ubiquity of guilt, man in the oppressive state must avoid the roles of victim and executioner. But if one is forced to choose between the two, Solzhenitsyn recommends the former role. For him, life itself is not the highest good and he is thus willing to die for certain principles.

We have often mentioned Solzhenitsyn's moralism. Perhaps it is now appropriate to discuss this subject in detail.

The Return to Values

One of the political and social evils of our time, Solzhenitsyn believes, is the notion of moral relativism. Simply expressed, this is the idea that there are no absolute standards of right and wrong and that, given a suitable set of circumstances, any act may be justified. Solzhenitsyn recognizes and bemoans the fact that modern man is embarrassed to use terms such as right and wrong. Merely endorsing certain values invites charges of being presumptuous. The word "moralistic" now assumes a pejorative connotation. In a pseudo-sophisticated age, good and evil fall sway to "situational ethics."

But Solzhenitsyn rejects this tendency, arguing that there are some definite standards of good and evil. For him, moral relativism is a fancy way to describe an abdication of responsibility. Dostoevsky wrote that "if there is no God, then nothing is forbidden." Similarly,
Solzhenitsyn claims that if all values are relative, then everything is permitted. In *Candle in the Wind*, Alex scorns

... that infernal pretext of the relativity of morality! You can justify any villainy by the relativity of morality! But raping a girl is always bad, in any society! Or beating up a child! Or driving a mother out of her home! Or slandering others! Or breaking a promise! Or abusing someone's trust.66

We now have some idea of those acts Solzhenitsyn considers to be wrong in any situation. But aside from this, what standard would he have men follow? What does he offer in place of moral relativism? Conscience, for Solzhenitsyn, is the source of values.67 He believes that inwardly, each person knows that some acts are always reprehensible. Not everyone follows the dictates of conscience, but this hardly proves that conscience does not exist. By virtue of being human, certain ethical imperatives are instinctive. But most men, he believes, choose to ignore these feelings, passing them off as "bourgeois" or as sentimentalism.

Modern man, Solzhenitsyn believes, has carried a commendable quality—skepticism—to an almost nihilistic extreme. Skepticism can only take one so far. Gleb Nerzhin, a prisoner in *The First Circle*, argues that while skepticism is needed to fight dogmatism, it "can never provide firm ground under a man's feet."68 When skepticism becomes a guise for moral relativism, any political act—genocide, torture, deceit—can be rationalized. One must transcend skepticism by affirming something, whether it be certain values or a love for mankind. Pragmatism must not exclude morality. Solzhenitsyn notes that Western opposition to the Nazis was morally as well as strategically motivated. Pragmatism is not exactly the same as expediency, there-
fore, and any dichotomy between pragmatism and morality is unfounded.

What is true of individuals also holds for nations.
Solzhenitsyn argues that it is natural and justified to judge nations by the same moral standards we apply to individuals. "Human logic," he notes, "can show no cause why if we permit value judgments on the one mutable entity [man] we should forbid them in the case of the other [the state]." In the broad sweep of history, no nation is guiltless. What men do for their own interest is often criminal; what men do for the state's interest is somehow heroic. Solzhenitsyn sees hypocrisy and danger in this tendency of judging individual and national action by different standards. Contrast this with the view of Hans Morgenthau, the foremost exponent of "political realism."

The individual may say to himself: "Fiat justitia, pereat mundus (let justice be done, even if the world perish)," but the state has no right to say so in the name of those who are in its care. This, Solzhenitsyn believes, opens the door to all sorts of mischief. To him, it is senseless to say that individuals may subordinate existence to justice but that nations must place survival above all else. No international order can exist without nations acknowledging that certain types of actions are wrong. It is thus useless to say that morality is relative.

In his search for values in a harsh and violent world, Solzhenitsyn obeys the existentialist impulse of our time. But by insisting on some absolute standards of right and wrong, by refusing to sanction any act so long as it is not in "bad faith," Solzhenitsyn dismisses one aspect of existentialism so much in vogue. Conscience is the wellspring of values. But for those who ignore the ethical
impulse, the state stands ready to prevent injustice. Since men often ignore the urgings of conscience, Solzhenitsyn has no qualms in advocating authoritarianism.

Freedom as Self-Restraint

Solzhenitsyn distinguishes between inner and outer freedom. Inner freedom we possess at birth. It includes a freedom to choose between good and evil. Outer freedom is the absence of physical restraint. This type of freedom is determined, not by the fact that we are human, but by the type of political structure under which we live. Most important is inner freedom, for it can be preserved under any circumstance. For Solzhenitsyn, what we think of as political rights are ephemeral. One government grants them, another denies them. Political or intellectual freedom is not an end in itself, but is a means for developing the spirit. Unlimited external freedom is useless unless it prompts reflection. One must use political freedom for something. It is dispensable, while inner or spiritual freedom endures.

Freedom is also distinguished from license in Solzhenitsyn's analysis. Like everything else in his thought, freedom has its limits. If not kept within bounds, freedom degenerates into libertinism and complacency. Similarly, authoritarianism is not reprehensible so long as it is not arbitrary and deceitful. Intellectual freedom—the right to say what one thinks—is of only secondary importance, he believes. Look at the West, Solzhenitsyn urges. It has all the intellectual freedom it needs, yet its will has weakened and it has become unprincipled. Political freedom is thus a medium for spiritual development.
To doubt is to be human, Solzhenitsyn claims. Responsible action, not physical pleasure, is life's aim. Political freedoms are not irrelevant, but neither are they sufficient to impart some sense of values. Intellectual freedom does have its practical benefits, however. Writers, for example, are often the Cassandras of society, foreseeing dangers in advance of their time. In the Soviet regime's early years, Solzhenitsyn recalls, authors such as Boris Pilnyak and Osip Mandelshtam were condemned for noting unhealthy traits in Stalin's character. Only in the 1950's was their insight vindicated, but by this time untold millions had needlessly suffered.

What Shelley said of poets, that they are the "unacknowledged legislators" of society, Solzhenitsyn says of writers in general. Writers serve as living reminders to the state. Their message is that political action should incorporate some ethical standard. In The First Circle, Innokenty Volodin, a young Soviet diplomat, confides to a friend that

... a great writer is, so to speak, a second government. That's why no regime anywhere has ever loved its great writers, only its minor ones.

When censorship is practiced, international agreements are ignored. No domestic constituency can protest the violation of treaties, for the promises are kept secret. Because of its monopoly over information, Solzhenitsyn believes, the Soviet Union can violate a Helsinki agreement or a strategic arms pact.

If Solzhenitsyn's view of freedom entails limits, it also requires responsibility. Freedom imposes the burden of choice. Moral choices are not always so clear-cut and the burden of freedom is
shouldered at the price of complacency and happiness. The process of cybernetic neurostabilization, used on Alda in *Candle in the Wind*, resembles the Great Operation of the Well-Doer in Yevgeny Zamiatin's *We*. The former operation imparts "granite-like mental health," turning one's nervous system into a "non-deviating vector." The latter process relieves men of "fancy." In both anti-utopias, men become automata. The life of the mind succumbs to the temptation of a lotus-eating existence. For Solzhenitsyn then, freedom involves a certain amount of pain which inheres in the act of choice. He is less concerned that men feel happy in a conventional sense--gorged on consumer goods and oblivious to the suffering of others. The Russian author recognizes, along with Erich Fromm and others, that freedom can be frightening and totalitarianism seductive. Choosing the course of freedom, whether on an individual or national level, is not only the more principled action, but is also what distinguishes man from other animals.

**Mother Russia**

Suffering has limits too. Russia has suffered enough, Solzhenitsyn says; let her now begin anew. Though he hates the Soviet regime, Solzhenitsyn loves his homeland. Indeed, he distinguishes between Soviet and Russian qualities. By the latter he means the pre-revolutionary experience. Reflecting upon the human agony in his country, Solzhenitsyn poses the same question asked by Chernyshevsky and Lenin: What is to be done? While Solzhenitsyn rejects the Marxist/communist route for his nation, in 1974 he presented an alternative in his *Letter to the Soviet Leaders*. Many Westerners, who thought they had seen in
Since you are already called revisionists by the Chinese, Solzhenitsyn writes, abandon your burdensome ideology. He does not necessarily ask the Politburo to relinquish power, for it is ideology and not authority which has tormented the Russian people. Russia should also grant genuine self-determination to the Eastern bloc states, the scattered nationalities, and should cease striving for illusory diplomatic gains. Obscure wars of national liberation are irrelevant to Russia's real needs, he believes.

Instead, Solzhenitsyn exhorts his countrymen to turn inward—in a political, geographical and spiritual sense. Specifically, the vast and untamed Northeast expanses of Siberia are Russia's salvation. Dismissing the notion of progress as a bane to humans and the environment, Solzhenitsyn seems to concur with the British economist E. F. Schumacher that "small is beautiful." Large cities and rapid industrialization are Western ills which Russia should not copy. Citing the Club of Rome's predictions of resource depletion, Solzhenitsyn supports a zero-growth economy. Russia is one of the few countries that can make a fresh start. The Siberian Northeast is the great frontier which symbolizes a spiritual rebirth within the Russian people. Russia could then concentrate on its domestic problems and abjure an activist foreign policy. For Solzhenitsyn, the Northeast is "more than just a musical sound and more than just a geographical concept." Rather, the Northeast symbolizes the recovery of traditional Russian values of piety. Imperialism, resource depletion, moral degradation—these problems would be solved. The Northeast is Russia's Promised Land, with Solzhenitsyn as its messianic advocate.
Russia need not adopt a democratic or parliamentary system, Solzhenitsyn argues. Democracies have been historically rare and short-lived. Russia has at times thrived under authoritarianism, he notes. But the Communist Party should no longer monopolize all thought. Solzhenitsyn personally believes that Christianity is Russia's salvation, but he advocates no state religion. He asks only that religion be "treated fairly and not suppressed." Democracy, besides being inappropriate for the Russian tradition, is also dismissed on practical grounds. War between various nationalities might result from the establishment of Western-style freedoms in Russia. Notice, Solzhenitsyn speaks of Russia's salvation and Russia's virtues. He advocates a "Russia first" policy in an increasingly interdependent world. But to Solzhenitsyn, this display of nationalism is justified by the fact that the Russian people have suffered more than anyone else. Since their agony has been most intense, he argues, Russians are excused for placing their national welfare above that of any other group.

This vision of Russia's future is pastoral and isolationist. Distancing himself from much that the West holds so dear, Solzhenitsyn places himself squarely in the 19th century Russophile (not Slavophile) tradition. After reading his Letter to the Soviet Leaders, no one can have the slightest doubt that the writer resides in the West only because he is forced to do so. With this publication, Solzhenitsyn ceased to be the darling of Western liberals, a role he neither sought nor desired.

Although Solzhenitsyn is contemptuous of Marxism, he does
support a brand of "ethical socialism." The latter is distinguished from its pseudo-scientific impostor by an esteem for human life above any ideological nirvana. This type of socialism is based, not on material goods or diplomatic gains, but on love. Modern socialism produces a community based on hate. Community, Solzhenitsyn implies, is not necessarily desirable. History tells him that communities frequently coalesce around hate for outsiders. Shulubin, the doleful Party member in Cancer Ward, reflects that "there's only one true socialism, and that's ethical socialism." Such a brand of socialism does not now exist, Solzhenitsyn adds. How ironic it is, he notes, that modern socialism has produced the most anti-social and philistine culture in existence! Mutual affection, not surpassing the West in industrialization or arms, should be socialism's aim.

Solzhenitsyn wants not just any type of community, but one that is national in scope and devoid of hatred. He believes that community is an individual and not a governmental task. Where a community does not exist, no government can magically create one. Rather, community is built first at an individual or personal level. The interaction is between persons, not between the government and the citizen. As long as men look first to politics for their salvation, the attainment of community will be unlikely. Though he is unclear regarding what values can cement a community, it is safe to say that Solzhenitsyn endorses the Christian values of love, charity, and piety. When so-called Eurocommunists now speak of "socialism with a human face," Solzhenitsyn accuses them of redundancy. Humanistic socialism is, for him, the only true socialism. Other forms
are called socialistic, but this is a veil for despotism.

**Critical Evaluation**

It is difficult to understand the faith Solzhenitsyn places in suffering. In his own writings, he offers telling criticisms of the notion that suffering has its meritorious effects. The Gulag, we learn, effaced in most men all that was humane. Compassion and friendship were endangered as long as only the cunning survived the camp ordeal. To be sure, Solzhenitsyn did not sink to this level, but his was an exceptional experience. Most men, he observes, became indifferent to their fellow men when confronted with suffering. Suffering is not necessarily ennobling and is quite often degrading. Were every man a Solzhenitsyn, he could sensibly urge personal calvary as a means of spiritual purification.

In some ways, Solzhenitsyn is his own most devastating critic. He recalls with bitterness that Janos Kadar and Wladyslaw Gomulka, respective leaders of the Hungarian and Polish Communist Parties, had at one time been unjustly arrested, tortured, and imprisoned. "The whole world sees how much they learned. The whole world has learned what they are worth." This may be unfair to Kadar, but this concession does not mortally wound Solzhenitsyn's main point. No guarantee exists that suffering will have what Solzhenitsyn considers to be a beneficial effect on people. If his chronicles prove anything, it is that suffering more frequently has harmful effects.

At the national level, mass suffering has only infrequently induced the type of change Solzhenitsyn desires. Nations need defeats, he argues, for they prompt introspection and liberalization.
Victorious war only whets a regime's appetite for more conquests. Yet, as Hans Morgenthau and others have noted, lost war is an equally large inducement to imperialism.\textsuperscript{93} Eager to recoup losses sustained in the last exchange, a defeated power may secretly prepare to alter the status quo with force. Mass suffering and national defeat contributed to the rise of Nazism in post-World War I Germany. Without the setbacks Russia received in World War I, the Bolsheviks may have never ascended to power. Perhaps it is no coincidence that ideology holds such sway in the wake of national defeat. The glorious future described by an ideology may compensate for mass feelings of emptiness and humiliation. National suffering is thus destructive as well as beneficial in the long run. It prompts domestic extremism and foreign imperialism as often as it produces introspection and regeneration.

Authoritarianism is also quickly accepted. Democracies are rare, authoritarianism the historical rule. Ideology and the Big Lie, not authoritarianism, are the real villains. People lived for centuries without democracy and they "were not always worse off."

Millions of Russians in the past centuries have lived under authoritarianism and they died happy. Autocracies preserved the nation's health: "obviously, since the nation did not die out." Yes, and some people even survived the plague during the Middle ages. May we therefore conclude that the Black Death preserved Europe's well-being?

Solzhenitsyn's defense of authoritarianism is at times feeble and unconvincing. He points to the relatively humane autocracies of the past, but perhaps these regimes were more humane only because they lacked modern and sophisticated instruments of terror. The modern
police state owes its existence not only to ideology but to technology. Though he says he cannot imagine a humane ideology, Solzhenitsyn can endorse benevolent autocracy. But what will keep the rulers benevolent? What checks will limit the arbitrary power that even Solzhenitsyn abhors? Again, Solzhenitsyn is often his own most incisive critic: "Unlimited power in the hands of limited people always leads to cruelty." And no one is more aware of the prominence of human failings than this man. Yet a passion for order over freedom persists.

Authoritarianism may maintain a habit of obedience which is most susceptible to ideological fervor. Perhaps it is also not accidental that modern authoritarian states often embrace ideologies. Visions of a utopian future make submission to authority a tolerable, if not welcome, task for the citizen. Ideology is a convenient way to exact conformity. Trusting no ideology, Solzhenitsyn attributes to authority all sorts of virtues. One gets the uneasy feeling that he endorses authoritarianism merely to show that Western institutions do not offer the best of all possible worlds.

Nor does he present a persuasive case for Russian isolationism. Russia should abandon an active foreign policy and concentrate on its own well-being. The rest of the world may choke on its own profligacy, but Russia is saved by the Northeast. Here lies plenty of food, minerals, and natural gas. It is only just that Russia close itself off from the rest of the world, since Russians have suffered most of all. Solzhenitsyn's call for a "Russia first" policy is reminiscent of the "beggar thy neighbor" philosophy of the mercantilist era. If the surrounding world crumbles, at least Russia will survive.
This is fitting, for Russia has suffered most of all.

But who does Solzhenitsyn blame for these hardships? He blames not just the ideology, or Lenin, or Stalin, but the Russian people. Russians were eager to cast off freedom and the responsibility that goes with it. The Big Lie is perpetuated by mass deceit. Russians not only submitted, but they tended their torturers in the old age!95 Russia is culpable for her own troubles. Without her habit of submission (engendered perhaps by centuries of authoritarianism?), the Gulag would not exist. Justifying Russian self-interest over global welfare, Solzhenitsyn cites his country's unexceeded agony. Yet Solzhenitsyn later shows the pain to be self-inflicted. No nation is guiltless, he argues. Somehow he is sure that since Russia's suffering has been the greatest, her welfare should be foremost. But Russia's welfare is not divorced from global existence. Solzhenitsyn may try to distance Russia from the world's problems, but this is not a decision solely within his power to make. The world will not allow Russia to sit watching cozily in its Northeast while the rest of the globe perishes out of warfare or scarcity.

At times, Solzhenitsyn becomes a mirror-image of those things he abhors. Consider ideology for instance. Solzhenitsyn rails against all ideologies, cataloging the injustice committed in their names. When he later discusses Russia's future, Solzhenitsyn advocates, of all things, Christianity—an ideology which he has already mentioned among those culpable for mass cruelty! Even without his Christian perspective, Solzhenitsyn's thought contains all the ingredients of ideology. His neo-Russophilism explains man and society
and tries to transform both. His thought contains its own metaphysic, its own ethical code. Occasionally striking a tone of intolerance, Solzhenitsyn can give no guarantee that his beliefs would not be used posthumously to justify some atrocity. His own beliefs jell into a product resembling his earlier definition of ideology. What Solzhenitsyn offers, therefore, is not an escape from ideology, but rather an ideology to end all ideologies.

**Conclusion**

This does not pretend to be an exhaustive discussion or critique of Solzhenitsyn's ideas. If the dissenting voice now emanates from Cavendish, Vermont instead of the Moscow suburbs, the relevance of the message transcends its geographical source. Specialization of knowledge reinforces the tendency to leave politics to "the experts." Solzhenitsyn does not claim to be an expert. He does not claim to be objective. This should not belittle his ideas, however. His is a fresh, if not always reassuring, message. Born of a personal suffering beyond most men's comprehension, Solzhenitsyn's mission is to introduce sanity, compassion, and morality to an age that considers itself value-free. Solzhenitsyn represents no movement, no cult. He merely represents his own conviction that politics should serve man, not man politics. Yet even this conviction is tempered by his belief in the limitation of political solutions.

If he cannot answer all questions or meet all objections, this is a consequence he accepts. He tries not to offer yet another philosopher's stone for re-molding society in some magic image. Even if his pleas fall on deaf ears, he justifies his own existence by bearing the
message of the millions whose voices will never be heard:

I dedicate this
to all those who did not live
to tell it.
And may they please forgive me
for not having seen it all
nor remembered it all,
for not having divined all of it.96
NOTES TO CHAPTER II


5 Solzhenitsyn, Cancer Ward, p. 405.

6 Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 57.


8 Ibid., p. 9

9 Ibid., p. 143.


15 Ibid., p. 56.

16 Ibid., p. 215.


18 Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 62.
NOTES TO CHAPTER II (continued)


24 Hayward and Labedz, p. xiv.


26 Ibid., p. 97


28 Solzhenitsyn, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, p. 177

29 Ibid., p. 199.

30 Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 9.

31 Solzhenitsyn, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, p. 68.

32 Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 85.

33 Solzhenitsyn, Cancer Ward, p. 193.


37 Solzhenitsyn, Cancer Ward, p. 194.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II (continued)


48 Ibid., pp. 615-616.

49 Solzhenitsyn, Letter to the Soviet Leaders, p. 68.

50 Solzhenitsyn, The Gulag Archipelago III and IV, p. 491

51 Ibid., p. 616.


53 Ibid., p. 119.


55 Ibid., p. 516.

56 Solzhenitsyn, The First Circle, p. 96.


58 Ibid., p. 281.

59 Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 119.
NOTES TO CHAPTER II (continued)

60 Solzhenitsyn, *As Breathing and Consciousness Return,* p. 17.
61 Ibid., p. 23.
62 Ibid., p. 16.
63 Ibid., p. 22.
66 Solzhenitsyn, *Candle in the Wind,* p. 110.
68 Solzhenitsyn, *The First Circle,* p. 78.
73 Ibid., p. 16.
74 Solzhenitsyn, Letter to the Soviet Leaders, p. 70.
75 Solzhenitsyn, "As Breathing and Consciousness Return," p. 16.
76 Solzhenitsyn, *Cancer Ward,* p. 137.
81 Solzhenitsyn, Letter to the Soviet Leaders, p. 28.
NOTES TO CHAPTER II (continued)


83 Ibid., p. 33.


86 Solzhenitsyn, Letter to the Soviet Leaders, p. 77.


89 Solzhenitsyn, Cancer Ward, p. 111.


91 Solzhenitsyn, Cancer Ward, p. 113.


93 Morgenthau, p. 55.


96 Ibid., dedication.
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CHAPTER III

SAKHAROV: THE SCIENTIST
AS DISSIDENT.

He appears to be an unlikely dissident—diminutive, shy, soft-spoken. Few would guess Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov to be the leader of the democratic movement within the Soviet Union. As a founder of the Moscow Human Rights Committee, Sakharov has barely avoided the exile imposed on two of his colleagues—Valery Chalidze and Zhores Medvedev. Less drastic, but nonetheless annoying, reprisals have been aimed at Sakharov. For supporting Jewish emigration rights, he has been mugged by police agents disguised as Palestinian terrorists. For protesting at political trials, Sakharov's wife Yelena Bonner has been threatened with imprisonment. For issuing manifestoes, Sakharov has had the prospect of psychiatric incarceration dangled before him. For having such a renegade father, Sakharov's children have been denied jobs and admittance to universities.

The paradox grows. Andrei Sakharov is widely known as "the father of the Soviet H-bomb," the youngest man ever to gain full membership in the Soviet Academy of Sciences, the brilliant protégé of the eminent physicist, Igor Tamm. Sakharov has received a Stalin Prize, a Lenin Prize, and has thrice been distinguished as a Hero of Socialist Labor. In the 1960's, Sakharov belonged to the privileged elite of the new technocratic class. Reasons for dissatisfaction seemed nonexistent.
Whether he lounged in his posh dacha, rode in his chauffeured automobile, or taught at the prestigious Lebedev Institute of Physics, Sakharov awaited a comfortable future. How then has he become "an enemy of the people"? How can one nondescript man pose such a threat to the Kremlin? What dissonant views does he harbor that make him so intolerable to the Soviet regime?

Those studying Sakharov approach a complex man. His beliefs have changed over time. They are dynamic, even now in a process of evolution. They resist the tidy classifications of which academicians are so fond. Nevertheless, a few themes may be useful in understanding the development of Sakharov's political thought. Before 1968, Sakharov was what one might call a neo-Marxist. That is, he wished to restore Soviet society to what he believed to be the humane ideals of Karl Marx. Stalin perverted Marxist philosophy, he believed, while Lenin captured its essence. Thus, until 1968, Sakharov was a neo-Marxist or, if you will, a neo-Leninist. His views he then described as "profoundly socialist."

After 1968, however, Sakharov's confidence in socialism wanes. He believes that, in theory, socialism built around "scientific principles" is possible. In practice, he feels, humane socialism has been rare. By 1975, Sakharov calls himself a liberal, albeit a nondogmatic liberal. An "open society," one that tolerates the free expression of all ideologies, seems to be his goal. Running throughout Sakharov's thought is the influence of the scientific method upon politics. Only through the critical testing of various ideologies will the common good emerge.
Sakharov seeks to transpose the virtues of the scientific milieu—open-mindedness, toleration, rigorous testing of hypotheses, free discussion—onto the political realm. This view also underlies Sakharov's internationalism. He believes that the nation-state is an antiquated way to organize society, for reasons we will later explore. Only a global approach can solve global problems. In 1977, therefore, Sakharov is a non-dogmatic liberal and an internationalist.

No one can confidently claim to know what caused these changes in Sakharov's thought, but some explanations are offered in the section, "Marxism and Socialism." Let us begin, therefore, by examining Sakharov's critique of his own country.

The Soviet System

Soviet society, Sakharov noted in 1968, has departed from the "scientific principles" inherent in true Marxism. Such principles, Sakharov believed, included free and open discussion, fair treatment of divergent ideas, and a willingness to criticize without fear of reprisal. It is precisely these qualities that Soviet society lacks. Solzhenitsyn judged the Soviet system using his own humanistic and personal criteria. Sakharov argues that, even by Marxist standards, the Soviet system is faulty. In 1968, these two dissidents evaluated Soviet society using two very different perspectives yet still produced similar verdicts.

When the state controls all aspects of life—economics, politics, ideology—mass conformity is the result. The monopolization of all facets of life is, to Sakharov, the heart of totalitarianism.
Dependence on the state is calculated to breed servitude among the Soviet citizenry. When men rely on the government to tell them what to think, where to work, and how to live in general, everyone has a stake in preserving the status quo. Thus does statism reinforce the essential conservatism of Soviet society. Despite boasts of having the best system, the Soviet regime, by restricting travel and emigration, prevents its citizens from making their own comparisons. Lacking any standard of comparison, the average Soviet citizen lapses into a materialistic quest for consumer goods. Consumerism, Sakharov believes, is the new opium of the masses. It offers an escape from the dreary slogans and the broken promises characterizing the regime. Self-reliance is exactly what the regime fears, Sakharov argues. For this reason, "the collective" is exalted and the individual belittled.

Sakharov expresses in more explicit terms than Solzhenitsyn the idea that Soviet government represents, not communism or socialism, but state capitalism. To Sakharov, Soviet exploitation differs from American capitalism only by dint of its greater oppressiveness over all walks of life. Again using Marxist terminology, Sakharov notes that the Soviet state now extracts all surplus value from the toiling masses. In earlier times, the private capitalist performed the same role. Both types of exploitation are onerous. In its excessive statism, the Soviet system offers no new, ideal, or even beneficial way to organize society, Sakharov believes.

Also like Solzhenitsyn and Djilas, Sakharov notes the rise of a new class in Soviet society. Ranking Party and state officials, the
nomenklatura, drive their hand-tooled Zil limousines, send their dull-witted children to the best schools, and avoid long lines by shopping at cheap and convenient "hard currency" stores.⁷ Like the Inner Party in George Orwell's 1984, the Soviet elite clings to its privileges. Sakharov refers to the "ostentatious and inefficient class structure" in the Soviet Union, a structure no more egalitarian than the Czarist order.⁸ But at least the old system acknowledged its inequality, something the Soviet system refuses to do. By placing their children in the finest schools, by finding their progeny cushy jobs in the Party and state, the new class is becoming a hereditary aristocracy. Advantages in earning and learning are passed from generation to generation. Again, this occurs in other societies too. But when it does occur, it is often recognized and not masqueraded as the "progressive will of the laboring masses."

No guarantee exists that the Communist Party will protect the common interest. Instead, Sakharov predicts that the Party will only protect its own "caste interests."⁹ As an oligarchy which claims to rule for the good of the many, the Soviet leaders resemble the worst despotisms of the ancient world. If would-be kings and tyrants now clamored for power, their claims would be met with derisive laughter. Why then should such claims—i.e., ruling in the interest of the many—now be accepted just because they come from a group that calls itself the Party? At times, Sakharov implies that the Party's inability to override its own interest will inevitably lead to the dissolution of the one-party system. In such a way does Sakharov impale the Party upon its own Marxist notion of "internal contradiction."¹⁰
Unlike Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov sees the concentration of political power as the root of Soviet evil. Excessive statism, not Marxist ideology, is the main culprit. Yet Sakharov does not ignore the ideological factor. Indeed, he inveighs against the "ideological monism" which pervades Soviet society. But Sakharov, unlike Solzhenitsyn, is more willing to distinguish between this later perversion and original Marxist thought. Under this "ideological monism," only one interpretation (i.e., the Party's) of one ideology (i.e., Marxism) is allowed. Party decree is law. The messianic pretensions of Soviet society are alien, Sakharov claims, to the ideal society. Divergent thoughts should be tolerated, lest society stultify and decay. Pressures for conformity require the Soviet citizen to lead a double life. At work, he pays lip service to Party slogans. In private, he sneers at the Party line. Since professional advancement more often results from ideological conformity than from expertise, those who rise to the top of their field are usually "hypocrites and timeservers," Sakharov believes. When Party guidelines govern promotion, society is run by a ruling "mediocracy."

The Soviet citizen must thus practice his own brand of double-think, assuming the trappings of conformity to hide a foundation of weary cynicism. Dependent on the state for his livelihood, information, promotions, and even entertainment, the Soviet citizen is a product of Soviet totalitarianism. Like Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov notes that the system forces each person to participate in the Big Lie. Publicly, citizens extol the regime and support oppression. Privately, they are apathetic.
Perhaps such psychological tricks offer the only way to cope with an intolerant government. The contrast between myth and reality is so stark that this two-track way of thinking is understandable. Daily propaganda publicizes the state's love of peace, yet society is militarized to an unprecedented degree. Since most resources are sacrificed at the altar of heavy industry, Soviet society does not even faintly approach the world's highest living standard.\textsuperscript{14} Sakharov asserts that Soviet "supermilitarism" causes high defense budgets worldwide.\textsuperscript{15} As Roman mothers frightened their children by screaming "Hannibal ad portas!" so do the Soviet rulers parade the Chinese bogeyman to bolster the garrison state at home. Eradicating this "barrack-square" mentality is impossible, Sakharov believes, without domestic political reform.

Though the Soviet worker is bombarded with the news that he is the master of his country, he knows that "the real masters are those who, morning and evening, speed through the deserted, closed-off streets in their armed limousines."\textsuperscript{16} Proclaiming itself the world's most democratic state, the regime holds between 2,000 and 10,000 political prisoners.\textsuperscript{17} To ensure that the myth of Soviet superiority is not deflated, morbid secrecy enshrouds the country.\textsuperscript{18} Despite claims of supporting "progressive elements" in foreign countries, Soviet diplomacy is characterized by a "pragmatic lack of principle."\textsuperscript{19} Thus does the regime, under the guise of aiding "wars of national liberation," support the genocide of Ibos in Nigeria and Kurds in Iraq. On the pretext of aiding "enlightened factions," Soviet leaders arms the corpulent dictator Amin in Uganda and the mercurial Qaddafi in Libya.
Despite the rhetoric, Sakharov concludes, Soviet diplomacy embraces Machtpolitik so cynically that even a Bismarck would be impressed.

Sakharov's critique of the Soviet system has changed through the years. For example, in his 1968 treatise Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom (hereafter referred to as Progress), Sakharov claimed that in economic performance, socialism and capitalism had "played to a tie." From 1968 to 1974, however, he grew more convinced of the inferiority of the Soviet socialist alternative with its attendant poverty, inefficiency, and shoddiness.

In 1968, Sakharov seems almost Sinophobic in condemning Maoism. The specter of Asian hordes seemed to loom large as he wrote that "our chief foreign policy problems is our relations with China." In this respect, the Sakharov of 1968 is similar to Solzhenitsyn and Amalrik, both of whom warn darkly of an impending Sino-Soviet war. Yet in the early 1970's, Sakharov abandons his inordinate concern over the Chinese menace. Again, as in 1981, Oceana alternately fights Eurasia and Eastasia as an excuse for militarizing society, so do Soviet rulers alternately use the capitalist and Maoist "threats" to legitimize their own rule.

On balance, Soviet society has more faults than virtues, Sakharov believes. In 1968, he seemed to view these faults as temporary aberrations. After nine years of vain struggle to reform the system, Sakharov is more convinced that the problems are deeply rooted. Like Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov calls for a regeneration among the Russian people. His regeneration would differ from Solzhenitsyn's however, by being less patriarchal, less nationalistic. Sakharov calls for a spiritual renewal that will avoid the twin extremes
of asceticism and materialism. He seeks reform, not to recover a sense of "Mother Russia" or to retreat into the past wearing sackcloth and ashes, but to realign Russia and the world along "democratic scientific" principles. Sakharov believes that Solzhenitsyn condemns one anachronism (i.e., Soviet tyranny) while replacing it with another anachronism (i.e., Great Russian chauvinism). Instead, Sakharov attempts to synthesize the most ennobling socialist ideals with the most modern scientific techniques.

**Marxism and Socialism**

Like his view of the Soviet state, Sakharov’s attitude toward socialism has changed since 1968. In *Progress*, he laces his arguments with Marxist jargon, referring to the class struggle, progressive forces, and the scientific approach to politics. He is deferential to Marx and Lenin. To temper his criticisms, Sakharov states in 1968 that his views are "profoundly socialist." In 1968, Sakharov argues that despite its flaws, the Soviet system had "demonstrated the vitality of the socialist course" and "like no other system, has glorified the moral significance of labor." Criticizing society from a Marxist perspective, Sakharov recalls that Marx and Lenin distinguished between bureaucratic and democratic systems of socialism. The latter is Sakharov’s ideal; the former represents the Soviet state. Note, Solzhenitsyn sees Soviet state capitalism as a predictable product of Marxist thought. Sakharov, however, sees it as the perversion of an essentially humane ideology.

Unlike Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov argues that the term "Leninist"
is meaningful and urges that Lenin's ideals be recovered. He associates Lenin with humaneness, toleration, and self-determination. At least in 1968, Sakharov believes that Lenin's successors have betrayed the spirit of 1917. Lenin's nationality policy Sakharov judges to be particularly enlightened. Leninism was a distinctive style of rule, Sakharov argues. One cannot accept Peter Dornan's view, therefore, that "the term 'Leninist' has no real meaning for Sakharov." On the contrary, the fact that the term is fraught with meaning is probably the main reason for Sakharov's early dissent.

Yet Sakharov offers his own revisions of the Marxist creed in 1968. For instance, he argues that dogmatic anti-capitalism is just as unwarranted (perhaps less so) as rabid anti-communism. Joseph McCarthy's ruthlessness was lukewarm compared to Soviet paranoia concerning "bourgeois influences." Sakharov calls for an undogmatic Marxism, one that recognizes and incorporates positive features from capitalism.

The Marxist concept of dialectic receives special consideration. Though the capitalist world gave birth to the socialist system, this does not mean that the two systems are irreconcilable. That socialism follows capitalism in Marx's view of history does not prove either the superiority of socialism or the inferiority of capitalism. Sequence does not necessarily impart value. Without an Igor Tamm, the scientific breakthroughs of Andrei Sakharov might have been impossible; but no one condemns Tamm because his views paved the way for Sakharov's accomplishments. To do so would be to jump from time to value, a logically unwarranted leap. Especially in a nuclear age, the antagonistic
notion of the dialectic is suicidal and stupid, Sakharov argues.

Between 1968 and 1975, Sakharov sours toward socialism in general. Heretofore, he argues, all socialist states have been repressive. Sakharov refers to the "ordeals which, so far, no communist country has been spared: cultural revolutions, massive repressions, and the dominance of the bureaucracy." In My Country and the World (hereafter referred to as My Country), he argues that socialism has thus far always meant a one-party state, bureaucratic tyranny, secret police terror, expropriation of nearly all private property, and worker exploitation. Religious persecution is a "frightful tradition" in all socialist states, he argues. Soviet society is not alone in its excesses. Totalitarian socialism is all that the world has seen heretofore. Ideal socialism would leave some private property intact, tolerate competing political parties, and allow free expression of ideas.

Existing totalitarian socialism (Sakharov also calls it "pseudosocialism") is an historical dead end. Sakharov refers to the late Arkady Belinkov, another dissident, who once wrote that "socialism is the kind of thing that is easy to sample but hard to spit out." Indeed, there are many examples of countries which have passed from feudalism or capitalism into socialism, but there are few instances of socialism evolving into a capitalist structure. His criticism is not merely that socialism has never voluntarily evolved into a capitalist or democratic structure. Sakharov's point is rather that socialism has never evolved into any different system, period. This is why Sakharov tends (he seems undecided on the issue) to view present socialism as an historical cul de sac.
Totalitarian socialism is an impostor for true Marxism. Democratic socialism is Sakharov's preferred alternative, but he claims that presently it does not exist. Obviously Sakharov has not abandoned all hope of evolution toward progressive principles in the Soviet Union. But he believes that some external force, such as Western pressure, must facilitate the process. Sakharov is gloomy, not about evolution per se, but about voluntary liberalization.

Sakharov had come a long way from his "profound socialism" of 1968. In a 1972 interview with Jay Axelbank of *Newsweek*, Sakharov explained:

> When I wrote [Progress] I was a little idealistic. I wrote from what you call a position of abstraction... I called myself a socialist then, but I have now modified my beliefs... I would no longer label myself a socialist; I am not a Marxist-Leninist, a communist. I would call myself a liberal.  

Similarly, in an October 1973 interview with the Swedish journalist Olle Stenholm, Sakharov declared,

> I am skeptical about socialism in general. I don't see that socialism offers some kind of new theoretical plan, so to speak, for the better organization of society... We have the same kinds of problems as the capitalist world: criminality and alienation. The difference is that our society is an extreme case, with maximum lack of freedom, maximum ideological rigidity, and--this is the most typical--with maximum pretensions about being the best society, although it is certainly not that.  

At this point, one might be tempted to conclude that Sakharov embraces Solzhenitsyn's blanket rejection of socialism. This would be a mistake, however. Later in the Stenholm interview, Sakharov argues that socialism does not require an absence of competing parties, implying that present forms of socialism exhibit flaws not
endemic to Marxism. Solzhenitsyn refuses to concede this point. In 1975, Sakharov believes that a different kind of socialism—"socialism with a human face"—is possible even if it is now rare. To be sure, Sakharov compares Soviet communism to Western capitalism. To be sure, neither structure conforms exactly to Sakharov's liberalism. Still, it is clear that he believes Western capitalism to be closer to the "scientific—democratic" ideal than its Soviet socialist counterpart.

What may account for the changes in Sakharov's thought? Soon after Sakharov completed his 1968 treatise, Soviet tanks rumbled into Czechoslovakia to squelch the democratic reforms of Dubček's "Prague Spring." Sakharov was deeply shaken by this action, fearing that it heralded a return to Stalinism. Perhaps at this point he grew more bitter toward the regime and everything associated with it. Additionally, Sakharov had campaigned for a limitation on nuclear testing ever since Khrushchev's reign. Toward the end of the 1960's, the futility of Sakharov's pleas became apparent. With an ever-increasing megatonnage, nuclear testing continued. The Soviet arsenal grew. Perhaps Sakharov then decided to discard his faith in socialism and become a more strident critic.

More disillusionment followed. For publishing his unorthodox ideas in Progress, Sakharov was dropped from the Soviet nuclear program. He was denied access to classified information. The official press began to hound him. He became a persona non grata among his scientific colleagues. Realizing the enormity of the reformer's task, Sakharov may have decided to revise his mild-mannered musings of 1968.
Meanwhile, many of his dissident friends were harassed. Vladimir Bukovsky was sent to a psychiatric prison. Solzhenitsyn, Chalidze, and Zhores Medvedev were exiled. Sakharov's family seemed endangered. As his circle of acquaintances grew, Sakharov's knowledge of the outside world increased correspondingly. Perhaps the flaws were more deep-seated than he had originally thought. Having more time to reflect and more opportunities to compare systems, Sakharov's assumptions regarding socialism were revised.

Stalinism

Stalinism was the supreme bastardization of Marxism, Sakharov believes. The Stalinist system displayed the worst excesses of totalitarian socialism. Stalinism, not socialism, has been the main source of Soviet tyranny. Though Stalin has been dead for nearly a quarter of a century, neo-Stalinists remain lodged in the ruling organs. Vestiges of Stalin's mentality—intolerance, paranoia, cunning—these linger long after Khrushchev's so-called denunciation of the dead vozhd. Accordingly, neo-Stalinists should be purged from the government's ranks. Only a thoroughgoing expose of Stalin's crimes can lay the foundation for a regeneration and democratization of Soviet society. Archives of the secret police should be opened for public inspection, political victims rehabilitated, and "little Stalins" rooted out of their positions. Though in 1970 Sakharov is less confident regarding the possibility of democratic socialism, in 1968 he passes Stalinism off as "a tragic accident, a serious, though not inevitable, disease." This conviction is shaken in the 1970's as he learns of
many other police states which clothe their repression in Marxist
garb.

In any case, Sakharov rejects Solzhenitsyn's facile view that there is no such thing as Stalinism. Most observers agree with Sakharov. The latter contrasts Lenin's lenient nationality policy with Stalin's harshness. Indeed, Lenin complained of Stalin's ruthlessness when the Georgian was the Commissar of Nationalities. Lenin may have been no gentle lamb, but the contrast between him and Stalin is nevertheless vivid. No matter how fiercely Lenin hated a fellow Comrade, he never had him killed but instead preferred "rehabilitation." Lenin scrupulously observed the principle of leadership collegiality and, unlike Stalin, refused to concentrate all power in his own hands.

Posited against Stalin's narcissism is Lenin's self-effacement. Significantly, the "cult of Lenin" grew only after the leader's death. Stalin, on the other hand, craved idolatry while he was still alive.

Absent in Lenin was Stalin's morbid paranoia. Shortly before he died, Lenin warned Kamenev and Zinoviev about Stalin's rudeness and arrogance. A Stalinist-style purge would have been out of character for Lenin. Anyway, Stalin felt threatened by Lenin loyalists, the old Bolshevik "class of 1917." Who could have possibly aroused such fear in Lenin? And no doubt Lenin favored collectivization, but never at such a crushing pace and at the cost of "liquidating the kulaks as a class." The reforms of the New Economic Policy of the early 1920's attest to Lenin's gradualism as opposed to Stalin's impatience for industrialization. Notwithstanding the historical reconstructions of Lenin in Zurich (Is it a novel? An historical novel? An authentic
documentary?), Sakharov cannot accept Solzhenitsyn's simplistic view of Stalinist evil.

The Problem of Change

Gradualism

Like Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov rejects revolution as a means for societal change. His reasons for this opposition are also similar to Solzhenitsyn's. For Sakharov, revolutions spell violence, destruction of worthwhile economic and legal institutions, "mass sufferings, lawlessness, and horrors." Aside from these general risks, Russia has experienced so much turmoil that another revolution would irreparably rip society apart. Sakharov echoes the 19th century Fabian socialist view regarding the "inevitability of gradualness." Positive reform will more likely result from working within the system—forming groups, petitioning the government, and appealing to world public opinion. While Solzhenitsyn believes that meaningful change will start only at the individual level and is skeptical toward mass movements in general, Sakharov thinks that group action is the answer to the problem of reform. Solzhenitsyn is largely contemptuous of political panaceas, preferring individual commitment. Sakharov prefers broad-based action reminiscent of vintage 19th century Russian populism.

Concerted action is necessary because the Soviet system will not reform itself, Sakharov believes. Sakharov shares Solzhenitsyn's concern that reform be based on certain values. First, reform should be sought with a "scientific" spirit. By "scientific," Sakharov means "a method based on deep analysis of facts, theories, and views,"
presupposing unprejudiced, unfearing open discussion and conclu-
sions." This rigorous approach excludes the ideological monism of
Soviet society. Second, reform should aim at "the systematic defense
of human rights." Sakharov judges all action by whether or not it
advances the cause of human rights. Such rights forbid torture, geno-
cide, censorship, and travel restrictions. Third and more generally,
reform must aim at democratizing Soviet society. Interestingly (perhaps
naively), Sakharov believes that democratization can be implemented
"with the direction of the CPSU" and that such a process is fully com-
patible with the Party's "leading role" in economic, political and
cultural life. But democratization must be well-planned and gradual.
Sakharov labors under no timetable even though, as we shall see later,
he does have general target dates.

In 1968, Sakharov displays his own brand of dogmatism. Arg-
uing for peaceful coexistence in general, Sakharov rejects any
"ideological collaboration" with "ideologies of Fascist, racist, mili-
taristic, and Maoist demagogy." Now we know with what groups
Sakharov will work. China and her 800 million are removed from the
picture. Since he laments the plight of the black American, Sakharov
must thus exclude "racist" America from his plans. And as for mili-
taristic countries, Sakharov has just excluded his own regime! Surely
this is unintended, but Sakharov's refusal to even talk with those
systems he deems to be beyond the pale renders his proposals banal.
He patiently explains how Soviet society is oppressive and militaristic,
yet he is willing to work within and compromise with his system. Some-
how, in an astonishingly inconsistent vein, he cannot bring himself to
recognize other extremist governments. Yet strict adherence to this principle would prevent Sakharov from reforming his own society. Were Sakharov not an internationalist, this inconsistency would not severely damage his proposals. But since Sakharov's is a global vision, he clearly cannot change the world the same way one manages a country club—admitting only those whose views he finds palatable.

Sakharov also exhibits a classic liberal faith in education as a means of improving society. Whether he convenes a meeting in his Moscow apartment, writes to foreign heads of state, or circulates samizdat at home, Sakharov aims his appeal not only at Russia but at the world. He is more of an internationalist than Solzhenitsyn. Their different perspectives are attributable to their divergent verdicts regarding the West's ability to induce Soviet reform. Confident that applying reason or "scientific principles" to problems will improve society, Sakharov shares the Enlightenment's esteem for rationality. In the Enlightenment, Sakharov sees the cure for Russia's torpor. In the Enlightenment, Solzhenitsyn sees the secularization of society and the seeds of moral relativism. To one thinker, Enlightenment values are the answer; to the other, they constitute the problem.

The Intelligentsia

When he speaks of the intelligentsia, Sakharov generally means the scientific and artistic elite of Soviet society. His view is much more all-encompassing than Solzhenitsyn's, which demands of the intelligent more character than intellect. Because of the demands of modernization, the new technocracy constitutes "the most socially conscious and influential segment of society." Sakharov believes
that the intelligentsia reflect the true interests of the masses. He seems to imply that the new experts are so vital to the regime’s modernization schemes that their demands for democratization will have to be met. The artistic elite now seem to be left behind, since their skills are not needed for industrialization. Sakharov believes that secretly, most of the intelligentsia desire democratic reform. But owing to low pay, an atmosphere of anti-intellectualism, and ideological rigidity, the intelligentsia has been cowed into submission.

The state needs the scientific intelligentsia, but distrusts it. Dangling the carrot of special privileges, brandishing the threat of unemployment or worse, the Soviet rulers have intimidated the scientific elite. The result is a "narrow professionalism" wherein scientists are too timid to pursue innovative projects lest they become controversial. More than anyone else, the intellectual must lead a dual life, gaining through private discussions the intellectual gratification denied him by his job.

Between Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, therefore, we see two vastly different ideas regarding the intelligentsia. To Sakharov, the intellectual symbolizes rationality. To Solzhenitsyn, he embodies moral rectitude. The difference is one of emphasis between the smart man and the good man, between logos and ethos. In Sakharov’s plan for reform, the intellectual proselytizes. In Solzhenitsyn’s vision, the intellectual serves as an inspiring example only. During 1976 interview with Michael Charlton of the British Broadcasting Company, Solzhenitsyn stated,

Once I used to hope that experience of life could be handed on from nation to nation, and from one person to
another, but now I am beginning to have my doubts about this. Perhaps everyone is fated to live through every experience himself in order to understand.55

The argument strikes right at the heart of Sakharov's assumption concerning the transmittability of human experience. The Enlightenment faith in education requires one to reject Solzhenitsyn's view. Starting from two different epistemological premises, Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn predictably reach different conclusions regarding the intelligentsia, its role in reform, and the efficacy of mass movements in general.

Intellectual Freedom

Like Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov values intellectual freedom as a means to an end, an instrumental good. Freedom of thought is the only antidote to mass myths, untruths, and demagogy.55 With his notion of a "marketplace of ideas," Sakharov resembles the liberal British philosopher John Stuart Mill. Given a chance to compete against Soviet ideology, democratic values would quickly spread, Sakharov implies. Free thought is thus a precondition for democratization.

Short of far-reaching reforms, however, freedom of thought is needed in order for society to grow and flourish.56 Sakharov has an organic view of society: that which does not grow, dies. With censorship comes entropy. Free exchange of ideas is society's lifeblood. Without such freedom, genuine society does not exist. Instead, people merely live close to one another in an atmosphere of intellectual sterility.

Government regulation causes the arts to stultify. Sakharov claims that "incompetent [my italics] censorship destroys the living
soul of Soviet literature." Innovative ideas which could improve society are thus nipped in the bud. Sakharov implies that some censorship—i.e., competent censorship—is legitimate, but he never explains this nuance in his reasoning. No doubt Glavlit, the state's literary watchdog, considers itself a competent censor. But just what is a competent censor? And how can Sakharov ensure that the concept of "competence" will not be perverted to stifle free thought? And as long as there is some limit on free expression in Russia, will not people still be deterred from speaking their minds? Sakharov leaves these questions unanswered.

Intellectual freedom humanizes society, rooting out dogmatism and mediocrity. Progress necessitates intellectual freedom. Such liberty will also presumably curb Soviet adventurism abroad. Domestic democratic pressure will produce a more peaceful foreign policy. Thus does Sakharov, the consummate liberal, embrace a Wilsonian view of foreign policy: democratic states are peace-loving; autocracies are usually militaristic. Finally, intellectual freedom is the sine qua non of a "scientific democratic" approach to politics. Through appeals and patient explanation to the Politburo, Academican Sakharov will presumably persuade the leaders to recognize the folly of their oppressive ways, and a hundred flowers will bloom. Having reformed Soviet society, Sakharov and his coterie will proceed with the larger task of perfecting the world.

Ethics and Values

Certain values must underly reform. One source of these
values is the human conscience. In referring to "man's moral yearning for the good," Sakharov echoes Solzhenitsyn's belief in conscience as the wellspring of values.\textsuperscript{59} Man has an instinctive sense of right and wrong, Sakharov implies, but this sense has become distorted in the surrealistic atmosphere which prevails in the Soviet Union.

Beyond this, Sakharov believes that man is born with certain natural rights. These include freedom of thought, religion, and travel. Defense of these rights is the state's raison d'\^etre, Sakharov argues.\textsuperscript{60} Unlike a theorist such as John Locke, however, Sakharov does not agree that a state's violation of these rights justifies revolution. Since revolution usually begets only greater injustice, he argues, reform is the saner option. Sakharov's convictions regarding human rights do not rest solely upon the pangs of conscience, therefore, but on the notion of natural law as well. These convictions also rest upon Sakharov's faith in science. Respect for human rights will facilitate the "scientific-democratic" approach to politics. Free discussion, for instance, will encourage competition among ideas, the best of which will presumably emerge as polity.

Even if prospects for reform are bleak, the struggle against inhumanity must continue. By trying to mold society around the concepts of natural rights and scientific principles, the dissident reaffirms his own humanity in the face of overwhelming odds.

If a man does not keep silent it does not mean that he hopes necessarily to achieve something... He may hope for nothing but nonetheless speak because he cannot, simply cannot remain silent. There is a need to create ideals even when you can't see any route by which to achieve them, because if there are no ideals then there can be no hope.\textsuperscript{61}
Dissent is thus an existential imperative for the dissatisfied man. Self-determination should be one value underlying reform, Sakharov believes. Just as each nation has a right to choose its own form of government, individuals have the right to choose the society in which they wish to live. Freedom of emigration is thus essential. Travel restrictions and the prevalence of Jewish refuseniks attest to the Soviet violation of this principle. Nor is such oppression experienced by individuals only. Ethnic groups, such as the displaced Crimean Tatars, should also be accorded self-determination and returned to their homeland. It is unclear whether by self-determination Sakharov means limited autonomy or full statehood. Tiny groups, such as the Mezhki Turks, receive special sympathy. But it is not apparent that Sakharov would support secession on the part of a larger Union Republic.

Additionally, Sakharov calls for a more acute awareness regarding the effect of science on human values. In an age of genetic research and nuclear weapons, Sakharov's plea finds much resonance. Like the American physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, Sakharov's personal experience in weapons development lends urgency to his appeal. The Soviet scientist believes that education and pleas will make his colleagues more mindful of their responsibility for human welfare above all else. Solzhenitsyn dismisses Sakharov's idea as unrealistic: "In all the history of science, has scientific foresight ever saved us from anything? If it has, we normally know nothing of it." Undaunted, Sakharov still hopes that other scientists will follow his lead in opposing the arms race and the suppression of dissent.
The New Enlightenment

For his own country, Sakharov advocates many democratic reforms. Soviet citizens should be able to elect their own officials, choosing between many different candidates from various parties. Though Sakharov concedes that a multiparty system is not always necessary, he never fails to advocate such an arrangement whenever he speaks of reform. Party officials should also fill elective positions. Larger amounts of private ownership should be allowed. With independent newspapers and a purge of neo-Stalinists, Soviet society will recover its original creativity and dynamism. All aspects of life will flourish and "full information and competition" will rejuvenate the intellectual atmosphere.

On the global level, Sakharov's plans are more ambitious. He advocates that UN armed forces be granted the power to quell conflicts, not just between nations but within nations as well. An international council of jurists and scientists should be formed to advise the UN on matters pertaining to human rights and pollution. In order to deflate military budgets and to aid poor states, a 15-year tax equal to one-fifth the national income should be levied on developed nations. Even though countries such as the United States may have to reduce their standard of living, this will be done voluntarily, Sakharov believes, "solely for the sake of lofty and distant goals."

Though Sakharov labors under no timetable, he does have some target dates in his world plan. By 1980, socialist countries should reform along the lines of multiparty democracy, peaceful coexistence, and economic efficiency. From 1972 to 1985, capitalist states should
eliminate racism within their borders and should also endorse peaceful coexistence. The period from 1972 to 1990 should witness a joint Soviet-American effort at disarmament and world economic development. Détente will thus become entente. From 1980 to the year 2000, the systems will grow to resemble each other or "converge," "national contradictions" will subside, a world government will be created, and inexhaustible fuel sources (such as fusion) will be harnessed. Sakharov emphasizes that these dates are suggestions, not ironclad deadlines.

Critical Evaluation

It would be tempting, though mistaken, to view Solzhenitsyn as the dissident utopian and Sakharov as the dissenting realist. For instance, Sakharov argues that democratization will be carried out under the supervision of the CPSU. Moreover, he claims that democratization is compatible with the "leading role of the Party" in politics, economics, and culture. But is it realistic to expect the Party, which has heretofore jealously guarded its authority, to voluntarily place itself in a weaker position? Will the Party relinquish its hold over all aspects of Soviet life? And since Sakharov believes that the Party still embodies some mass myths, how can that same Party play a "leading role" in society, given competition among ideas?

He is no realist. Sakharov calls for a tax on developed countries. Without bothering to define the term "developed," he proceeds to assert that richer nations will submit to this levy for the sake of "lofty and distant goals." But if such voluntarism existed, there would now be no problem of a gap between rich and poor
states. For the sake of lofty goals, affluent nations can now offer foreign aid or contribute to the World Bank. Were Sakharov's assumptions regarding voluntary effort valid, the problem he seeks to solve would not exist.

To stabilize conflicts, Sakharov urges more frequent UN intervention. Such a policy might only increase international violence, however. Clearly, Sakharov favors UN forces defending the Kurds in Iraq and the Ache in Paraguay. But would he also support UN intervention to defend human rights in, say, Alabama or the Ukraine? He has already written that injustice is committed in both areas. But given the present voting arrangement in the UN Security Council, any proposal to intervene in either region would be vetoed. Sakharov never proposes to restructure UN voting arrangements; he offers no way to de-politicize the issue of UN intervention. He is no more realistic than Solzhenitsyn.

Were UN interventions more frequent, the world would be even more unstable in many cases. Herein lies one problem of all collective security arrangements. Through multinational action, local conflicts assume global implications. Rarely is the offending nation totally alone in the world arena. As the UN internationalizes a crises, the dispute turns from one between local combatants to one among many nations. Internal disputes can thus escalate into world wars. Yet Sakharov advances his proposal in the name of peace.

Sakharov's greatest strength may also be his greatest weakness: an undue faith in rationality and reason. His is an over-intellectualized approach in assuming that education cures all
ill. In the view of Walter G. Clemens of Boston University,

Sakharov writes and acts as though most men will,
in the long run, respond to reasoned argumentation.
He writes as though egotistical drives for wealth and
power—even for blood-letting—could be eliminated if
enlightenment spread.72

Sakharov reasons from intellect to ethics. The educated man will
usually be a good man, in his view. Yet the Albert Speer and the
Trofim Lysenko show that this is not always the case. There is no
necessary connection between intellect and rectitude. Modern society
is probably the most educated of all time and undoubtedly the most
scientifically advanced. Have these factors spawned the "best" so-
ciety or an enlightened world? If they had, then Sakharov would
have no reason to dissent. Since he does seek change, the very ex-
istence of his appeal undermines his correlation between knowledge
and virtue.

Sakharov's edifice of world government also rests on many
tenuous claims. Avoidance of nuclear war is the world's first pri-
ority. Most people, he believes, would prefer anything (including
the victory of their enemies) to nuclear war. But is the fear of
nuclear war really the world's most absorbing preoccupation? And, if
it is not, should it even be the world's foremost concern?

Neither question can be honestly answered in the affirmative. Like
many other world state proponents, Sakharov puts himself in the po-
position of arguing that global existence itself is the highest good.
But nations, like the individuals in them, cherish ideals for which
they are prepared to fight and, if necessary, die.73 Importantly,
the choice is not between a holocaust and world government, but
between the risk of nuclear war weighed against the perceived injustice of a global sovereign. Most nations would rather joust with the threat (usually dimly perceived) of war than to relinquish their sovereignty and freedom of action. And as long as a single nation-state believes this and resists the new leviathan, Sakharov's plans for genuine peace and world government will be shattered. Given one recalcitrant state, Sakharov would either have to resort to conquest (an act he condemns) or to a non-global state (a structure he views as antiquated).

Nations do not rank peace as an absolute value to be pursued at all costs. As long as one nation or group perceives the global state as illegitimate, imposing the new order on a reluctant world would edge manking closer to the nuclear Armageddon that Sakharov fears. In the abstract, nearly every country decries nuclear war. (Need we recall that 800 million Chinese follow an ideology which belittles the horror of nuclear war?) In practice, virtually no one thinks the risk is so great as to justify relinquishing sovereignty. World government can only follow, it cannot magically create, a genuine worldwide community of values. Abhorrence of the mushroom cloud is, by itself, an insufficient basis for such consensus. Without this consensus, world government will be established by conquest only. Sakharov might reply that the convergence process itself creates a suitable worldwide community of values. We will consider this answer in a moment.

Perhaps this makes too much of Sakharov's ideas regarding world government. On the surface, he seems to endorse a plurality of values—peace, freedom, private ownership. But without comprehending that these values often conflict with one another, Sakharov ends up
exalting one value—avoidance of nuclear war—above all others. Far from being all sweetness and light, Sakharov's analysis has a dark and troubling side. Despite his liberal intentions, his call and justification for world order would produce the most illiberal policies.

The whole notion of convergence is also suspect. Adam Ulam has pointed out, for instance, that convergence is found only between the societies, and not the governments, of East and West. An industrial manager in Pittsburgh perhaps faces the same problems and offers the same solutions as his counterpart in Smolensk. Nothing indicates that this induces a convergence between the values, procedures, or aims of the respective regimes, however. Societal convergence should therefore not be mistaken for political identity.

Convergence theorists also overlook the difference in the means of industrialization between East and West. In America, industrialization has been a gradual and decentralized process based on private ownership. In Russia, modernization has been accomplished at a forced pace directed from the highest Party and state echelons. The convergence theorist (of which Sakharov is a prime example) often fails to recognize differing values underlying surface similarities.

Despite increased governmental regulations and burgeoning welfare programs, American modernization is still based on private ownership. Despite experiments in decentralization and private enterprise, Soviet industrialization remains a state-owned endeavor. Convergence, such as it is, leaves basic values and organizational methods unchanged. Nor is it likely that the new technocrats will agitate for reform. Their advancement will still be based as much on Party
loyalty as on technical competence. The experts are not so indispens­able that all of their demands for reform will be heeded. Given the abundance of the new technical elites, other, more pliable replacements can be found for the random renegade. Yes, perhaps the consumer will suffer, but since when has consumer preference been the Politburo's prime motivating force? The new breed of specialists may indeed enter the political arena, but their access to the door will be controlled by the Party and will be on the Party's terms.

Underlying Sakharov's convergence theory is the assumption that ideology is the major source of East-West tension. But even if the respective systems renounced their ideologies, clashes of national interests even, mutual suspicions, might still produce tension between East and West. Systemic convergence, trade links, and ties of lineage did not prevent a major European war in 1914, for instance. Not only is convergence a mistaken path toward Soviet democracy, but neither is it a guarantee against conflict.

Conclusion

Perhaps in the long run Sakharov will be remembered more for what he did than for what he wrote. But as action is rooted in thought, one cannot fully understand his dissent without his doctrine. Westerners usually show a greater affinity to Sakharov than to Solzhe­nitsyn. More than the brooding novelist, Sakharov tells the West what it wants to hear. With his liberal-democratic perspective, Sakharov speaks in a familiar language to the West but in almost unintelligible tones to his countrymen.
It has been said that the first Soviet generation was guided by ideology, the second by terror, and the third by cynicism. In a wary age, Sakharov tries to rejuvenate the spirit of the early 1920's. He writes and works to remind others that reform is possible. Unlike Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov leads an organized movement. Having surveyed Soviet society from a privileged pinnacle, he now tastes the isolation of the pariah. Friends support him, Presidents write to him, but he alone directs the struggle. He may be a Russian philosophe. He may be a dreaming idealist. But his leadership is unquestioned.

He was, as they say, a crystal of morality... He was devoted to the idea that science should bring peace and prosperity to the world, that it should help preserve and improve the conditions for human life.79 Such accolades Sakharov received, not from a fellow dissident, nor from a Western supporter, but from one of his critics, Nikita S. Khrushchev.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III


4. Sakharov, Sakharov Speaks, p. 43.

5. Ibid., p. 167.


7. Ibid., p. 25.

8. Ibid., p. 12.


12. Sakharov, Sakharov Speaks, pp. 143-144.


15. Ibid., p. 148.

16. Ibid., p. 29.

17. Ibid., p. 31.


19. Ibid., p. 47.

20. Ibid.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III (continued)

22 Sakharov, _Sakharov Speaks_, p. 144.

23 Ibid., p. 172

24 Ibid., p. 44.

25 Sakharov, _Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom_, p. 54.

26 Ibid., p. 73.

27 Ibid., p. 61.


30 Sakharov, _Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom_, p. 73.

31 Ibid., pp. 78-79.


33 Ibid., p. 91.

34 Ibid., pp. 34-35.

35 Ibid., p. 90.

36 quoted in Dorman, p. 383.


38 Sakharov, _Sakharov Speaks_, p. 176.


40 Sakharov, _Sakharov Speaks_, p. 121.

41 Sakharov, _Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom_, p. 55.

42 Ibid., p. 72.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III (continued)


44 Sakharov, Sakharov Speaks, p. 175.

45 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 25.

46 Sakharov, Sakharov Speaks, p. 134.

47 Ibid., p. 117.

48 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 28.

49 Sakharov, Sakharov Speaks, p. 158.

50 Sakharov, My Country and the World, p. 97.

51 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 29.

52 Sakharov, Sakharov Speaks, p. 125.

53 Ibid., p. 177.


55 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 29.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., p. 62.

58 Ibid., p. 29.


60 Ibid., p. 112.

61 Ibid., p. 173.

62 Ibid., p. 162.

63 Dornan, p. 382.

64 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 60.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III (continued)


66 Smith, p. 443.

67 Sakharov, Sakharov Speaks, p. 125.


69 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 46.

70 Ibid., pp. 82-83.


77 Clemens, pp. 52-53.

78 Ibid.

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CHAPTER IV

ALMARIK: THE DISSIDENT

AS SEER

If there was any question that the dissident movement was heterogeneous, such doubts should be dispelled by the presence of Andrei Amalrik. An historian by trade, Amalrik has almost as little in common with other dissidents as he does with the Soviet leaders. In early 1960's, Amalrik was expelled from Moscow State University for holding un-Marxist views. In 1963 came his first brush with the authorities. Amalrik's early work, The Norsemen and Kievan Russia, contained the decidedly unpopular thesis that the eleventh-century Slavic state was founded by Scandinavians. Unable to publish this volume, Amalrik entered the Danish embassy in order to send his manuscript to an interested professor in Copenhagen. Though not strictly illegal, this act aroused official ire and marked Amalrik as a possible troublemaker for the regime.

It was not a mistaken verdict. Because of a congenital heart infirmity, Amalrik held no steady job. Instead, Amalrik cared for his ailing father and, more ominously, socialized with avant-garde artists and foreign journalists. On the pretext of "parasitism,"—i.e., living off of the state by not having steady work—Amalrik was tried and sentenced to three years of Siberian exile in 1965. Even after his conviction was overturned one year

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later, Amalrik refused to be cowed by the authorities.

Four years later, Amalrik was tried for "anti-Soviet behavior." His plays and, especially, his 1969 treatise foretelling Soviet doom contained too many heresies. To no one's surprise, Amalrik was found guilty and was sped away to prison. Released again in 1974, Amalrik continued to associate with foreigners and refused to still his pen. By the Summer of 1976, the regime could brook no more insolence and it exiled Amalrik along with his Tarter wife Guysel. They now live in Utrecht, the Netherlands, and verbally support the dissident cause.

Amalrik stands in bold relief to the two thinkers we have previously considered. Unlike Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, Amalrik constructs no philosophical system, embraces no ideology, offers not a single soothing word regarding Russia's future. Amalrik is the loner, the seer, the soothsayer. Let us begin this discussion, therefore, by exploring those beliefs that make Amalrik a dissident.

The Soviet System

What we have seen thus far on the part of the dissidents is a rather systematic demolition of the Soviet political mythology. Both Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov offered point after point to show how the Soviet system was morally bankrupt. Their reasons were thought-out, rational, and methodical. Having once believed in the system, these dissidents could trace their growing disillusionment with the regime.

Such is not the case with Andrei Amalrik, however. Rather, his dissent comes from the heart, not from the head. His dissent is more visceral than cerebral. Amalrik feels an "organic revulsion"
toward the system. He cannot stand to hear its litany of lies.
Pointing to his head, Amalrik states that his protest lies not here but, jabbing a finger at his stomach, there. "I am so opposed to the system that in reaction I want to do something with my hands."m

And he has. In his two books, Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1981? (hereafter referred to as 1981) and Involuntary Journey to Siberia (hereafter referred to as Involuntary Journey), Amalrik paints a picture of despair and doom. Exactly what is it about Soviet society that evokes Amalrik's nausea? To start with, the system is based on lies. Pravda lies. Izvestia lies. The radio lies. The Party lies. Amalrik, through contact with other free-spirited dissidents and occasional foreigners, thinks he knows what is true and what is not. Soviet propaganda, with its boasts of having the best system, is most emphatically untrue, Amalrik argues.

Secondly, the system treats man as an instrument, not as an end in himself. Work in "socially productive" areas is the regime's sole criterion of human worth, Amalrik laments. Self-interest is denounced as the collective is exalted. Soviet citizens are made to feel that individualism is unnatural. Callousness toward man's full range of needs renders the Soviet system immoral in Amalrik's view. As Sakharov denounced the "barrack-square" mentality of Soviet society, so does Amalrik rail against the lemming-like obedience of the masses.

Nihilism is a third flaw that the system exhibits, Amalrik argues. The Soviet people have lost all sense of values. Traditional morals such as honesty, love, and charity have now been replaced by the
notion of "class morality." Most Russians care only for themselves, Amalrik thinks. The Soviet rulers sustain themselves only because they have power, not because they attract the hearts and minds of the citizenry. Power is its own sustaining force, the Soviet state's raison d'etre. And the masses accept this, because they have the attitude that "it's useless to beat one's head against a wall."

Fourth, and most importantly, Amalrik objects to the Soviet system because it holds out absolutely no hope of improving itself. What people now see as a gradual liberalization, Amalrik argues, is really nothing more than the regime's growing decrepitude. While liberalization is a planned process moving toward clearly defined aims, the gradual "thaw" since Stalin's death has neither been thought-out nor officially endorsed.

Amalrik's rejection of the Soviet system rests on these four pillars. Let us discuss in more detail what Amalrik sees as the sources of these objectionable qualities. Like Solzhenitsyn, Amalrik distinguishes between Russian and Soviet national attributes. Unlike Solzhenitsyn, Amalrik sees the Russian characteristics as contemptible, maybe just as loathsome as Soviet qualities. For instance, Amalrik argues, Russians generally see violence and coercion as the only vehicle for change. Rather than persuading, cajoling, or quietly reforming, Russians would prefer to change a mind by breaking an arm. The whole notion of peaceful change is thus alien to the Russian mind, Amalrik argues.

The Russian national character thus provided fertile soil for Soviet tyranny. Russia is "a country without belief, without
Nihilism is a persistent strain in Russian thought, Amalrik argues. "Self-preservation, damn the moral consequences"—these have always been the Russians's watchwords, he feels.

It is also significant, Amalrik notes, that what few beliefs Russians have held have come from Byzantine, not Western, Christianity. The Eastern Orthodox creed quickly took hold in Russia since it was more "rigid and moribund" than its Western counterpart. Byzantine thought possessed an enormous appetite for orthodoxy. This habit of intolerance has ingrained upon the Russian mind all the now familiar qualities of paranoia and intolerance, Amalrik argues.

Russians are also blindly patriotic, willing to obey practically anyone who preys upon their nationalistic sentiments. Russians generally approved of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia but were incensed when the Chinese started lobbing shells across the Ussuri River one year later. How prescient Lenin was when, in a rarely noticed quote, he observed, "Scratch a Russian Communist and you will find a Russian chauvinist"! And Stalin knew what he was doing when, in those first desperate campaigns in World War II, he exhorted his people to defend not socialism, nor Stalin, but the Motherland.

On the national level, Russia exhibits self-destructive impulses, Amalrik argues. The Russian state has always destroyed its creators, whether the founders have been Scandanavians, Byzantines, Tatars, Germans, or Jews. It will destroy the communists
too, this historian argues. Since power is the only force sustain-
ing the regime, successive Russian states have lasted only as
long as a stronger claimant did not appear on the horizon. Amalrik
sees Machtpolitik as Russia's second nature. Russia, Amalrik argues,

... has betrayed all its allies as soon as it
found the slightest advantage in doing so. It has
never taken seriously any of its agreements. And it
has never had anything in common with anyone.7

Amalrik's verdict on Russia and the Russians is, to put it mildly,
harsh. When Solzhenitsyn speaks of traditional Russian values, he
thinks of love, piety, and self-sacrifice. When Amalrik writes of
traditional Russian values, he thinks of violence, egotism, narrow-
ness, and duplicity. Solzhenitsyn sees Russian values as a foil to
Soviet tyranny. Amalrik sees Russian values as the foundation for
later communist oppression.

In turn, the present regime reinforces these same despicable
qualities in the Soviet citizenry. Soviet society exhibits a process
of "unnatural selection" in which only the mediocre survive. The
result is that citizens are cast in the same molds of suspicion and
bigotry. Just before the 25th Party Congress in February 1976,
Amalrik was detained for questioning by the secret police. Emerging
from prison, Amalrik became depressed by the sight of the first two
people he saw.

How depressing it is, after all, I reflected, the
way the system molds people. Here are two of the first
Soviet people I've come across and they have the faces
of genuine stool pigeons.8

Amalrik draws his own unflattering caricature of the New
Soviet Man.
In any society government employees abound. The conservative, bored and dull-witted bureaucrat is a timeless image which finds resonance in all cultures. Unlike other societies, however, Russia forces all of her people to be government employees. Soviet citizens exhibit on a much larger scale these same petty qualities. Soviet communism is really state capitalism, Amalrik implies. (Here he concurs with Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov.) The state, not the worker, controls the means of production. Since people work for the state and not for themselves, their work simply becomes a "job." The Soviet worker finds no fulfillment in his labor. Alienation is not solely a problem of capitalist systems, therefore.

Despising his job, bored with the meaninglessness of routine, the Soviet worker feels impotent. No wonder vodka consumption is so high and hooliganism so rampant. "Since all of us work for the state, we all have the psychology of government workers." The Soviet citizenry is thus simply the typical bureaucracy writ large, with its attendant conservatism and mediocrity.

Amalrik and Sakharov both agree that the Soviet citizen is a product of Soviet totalitarianism. Amalrik differs with Sakharov, however, by contending that the Soviet citizen is a cause of Soviet tyranny as well. Amalrik describes Homo Sovieticus in much bleaker terms than Sakharov. But like Sakharov, Amalrik laments the uniformity and mediocrity of Soviet society. Careers advance on the basis of Party loyalty, not on skill. The toady has replaced the expert. Independent-minded persons are weeded out of the advancement process, lest they become intractable. Party promotion criteria validate the Peter Principle in
Soviet society: persons rise to their level of incompetence. Unlike the inept in other societies though, the Soviet bumbler will remain in his position; it was not skill which put him there in the first place. In Almarik's play, *Is Uncle Jack a Conformist?*, a rebellious youth insightfully notes that "people with real talent get persecuted these days."

In his plays, Amalrik portrays the apathy of the Soviet citizenry. Resigned to his fate, the Soviet citizen feels impotent with regard to his fate, and grows self-centered. In *My Aunt is Living in Volokolamsk*, Amalrik portrays at least two characters—the neurasthenic student and the poet—as sexually impotent. Major Kovalev's missing proboscis in *Nose! Nose? No-se!* has obvious phallic overtones and suggests castration. The imagery of sexual dysfunction may symbolize an overriding sense of mass powerlessness regarding political change. Indeed, the prominent mood of all of Almarik's plays is one of impotence and disorientation. Like the Soviet citizen, each character seeks gratification. Like the Soviet citizen, all characters feel powerless to change their fate, and people are concerned only about themselves. In Amalrik's drama, people talk at one another, speak past one another, but rarely communicate with each other. Perhaps the most frequently used word in Almarik's plays is "I." When few believe in the regime's conception of the common good, egotism is the ready alternative. And given the surreal atmosphere of Soviet society, where lies are submitted as truth and where in one day a dismissed Politburo member can become a non-person, it is appropriate that Amalrik chooses the theater of the absurd to convey his message.

Amalrik is probably closer to Sakharov than to Solzhenitsyn in
his view of the role of ideology in Soviet society. Like many other institutions, the official ideology is decaying. Even the highest Party members pay only lip service to it. Amalrik believes that ideology, to the Party apparatchik, "is some sort of vague backdrop," nothing more. Instead, Soviet leaders have a demonological view of the world: rival bureaucrats and unfriendly countries are led by evil motives. A most un-Marxist view this is, ascribing to forces of personality actions which "objective" factors such as class should actually determine.

While the Party hierarchy might simply mouth the official ideology, the vast majority of the masses, Amalrik argues, has little but contempt for it. The population has become "de-ideologized" as the state's propaganda barrage yields diminishing returns. In the play East-West: A Dialogue in Suzdal, one notices the following exchange:

Announcer: . . . Inspired by this appeal, the collective farmers of the district pledged themselves to harvest the wheat in time and without any loss . . .

Student [turning the radio knob] : What a bore . . .

It is safe to say that Amalrik believes that this is the way most Soviet citizens react to the official propaganda. Unlike Solzhenitsyn, then, Amalrik does not view ideology per se, and not even Marxist ideology, as the root of Soviet evil. Though the ideology does not help matters any, the basic cause of Soviet tyranny is what Amalrik sees as the Russian national psychology.

Of course, one reason why the masses have become so densensitized to the Soviet ukase is that they can readily see its falseness.
Amalrik joins Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov in cataloging the discrepancy between myth and reality. Yes, the Soviet economy appears to be strong, but its priorities are grossly lopsided. "Soviet rockets have reached Venus, while in the village where I live potatoes are still dug by hand." True, the regime calls itself a "worker's state," but most workers are dissatisfied with their lot. For all the rapturous praise of "the collective," this form of social organization is inimical to quality workmanship. While the media speaks of "proletarian solidarity," the Soviet leaders are the butt of derisive peasant jokes. During one of his exiles in Siberia, Amalrik noted the following ditty song by kolkozniks and prisoners:

Once there were three bandits,
Hitler, Stalin, and Nikita.
Hitler hanged us, Stalin beat us,
Nikita made us starve.

Amalrik also reports that prisoners often favorably compared Czarism to Soviet rule. Under the Czars, for instance, only political prisoners were shipped to Siberia. Under communism, simple drunkards are sent under the guise of combatting "parasitism" or "hooliganism." Certainly every country has its myths. But in few other countries does disbelief toward the mythology constitute a crime. In few other countries is all information sifted so that it will conform to the official creed. In no other system does one see such a deification of blind obedience.

The only thing that sustains the regime is force—pure, blind, overwhelming, brute force. Ideals no longer inspire the regime. Neither do they motivate the citizenry. The Soviet system is power incarnate, power stripped of any value besides self-preservation. One
dominant image contained in Amalrik's plays is that of aimless power. In The Fourteen Lovers of Ugly Mary-Ann, a Storyteller relates the following dream: "A car travels along the road crushing everything in its path—that's power for you." In My Aunt is Living in Volokolamsk, the student who becomes the scapegoat for anti-Semitic anger feels

... as though some dull, impersonal force were pressing down on men. It's like a blind elephant passing through the jungle, the crash of falling trees drowning out men's voices.

In Involuntary Journey, Amalrik compares the operation of the security organs to a huge mill which crushes its victims.

Such is the type of power the Soviet regime now wields, Amalrik implies. The regime's power is aimless, crushing all those in its path. Like the blind elephant, Soviet power cannot see the wreckage strewn behind. Like a car which has run amok, Soviet oppression cannot brake itself. It will stop only when it collides with a stronger force. The coercive juggernaut destroys much, and this is apparent to anyone who can penetrate the regime's Panglossian boasts.

At times, though, Amalrik implies that Soviet power is not so monolithic as his dramatic imagery might lead one to believe. Rather, the Soviet hierarchy contains many factions and interest groups. In the Involuntary Journey, Amalrik observes that the ordinary police and the secret police often work at cross-purposes. Ordinary policemen were more lenient, more imbued with common sense. If Amalrik's observation is valid, he confirms the view of many Western specialists in Soviet affairs who, like Gordon Skilling, use a "group theory" model to explain Soviet behavior. Bureaucratic infighting may be more
prevalent than publicized, Amalrik implies. At one point he attributes the growth of the dissident movement to this disunity within ruling circles.

In any event, Amalrik does not believe that this rivalry is capable of adjusting policies to public demands. Interest group competition is no self-regulating mechanism. The system is doomed, Amalrik believes. He loathes the regime, can find few redeeming qualities in it, and (unlike Solzhenitsyn) feels no sentimental ties to the homeland. Intolerant of free thought, slavish toward orthodoxy, the system stood no chance of persuading this man. When the Soviet leaders exiled Amalrik in 1976, they rid the system of an alien quality—uncompromising individualism.

Marxism and Socialism

As Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov once accepted the Marxist creed, they now reject it from the standpoint of the betrayed. Out of their disillusionment with the Soviet system came their rejection of the system's theoretical underpinning. To these dissenters, Marxism was "the God that failed." Such is not the case with Amalrik. Unlike the physicist and the novelist, Amalrik was never a Marxist. If Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn condemn Marxism from the position of the betrayed, Amalrik indict it from the viewpoint of the never-convinced.

While Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn were familiar with many Marxist texts, Amalrik can make no similar claim. Fellow prisoners often tried to entice him into debates about Marxism, but Amalrik resisted with the reply, "I didn't believe in Marxism and knew little about it." Amalrik shows little interest in Marxism and seems
undecided as to which Marx he should study. Should he study the regime's Marx? The revisionists's Marx? The Eurocommunists's Marx? The Western scholars's Marx? The young Marx? Perhaps the later Marx?

Marxist doctrine has been twisted to justify so many disparate courses of action that it has lost all usefulness as a "viable ideology," Amalrik argues. When a philosophy becomes so elastic, referring to it to justify or explain policies is pointless. Amalrik may not offer an indictment of Marx here, but rather a broadside against those who have perverted Marxism. Having never studied the philosophy, Amalrik can offer no systematic or penetrating attack on Marxist thought. He seems unable to divorce the ideology from the regime which claims to rule in its name. In this regard, Amalrik might agree with Solzhenitsyn in closely identifying the regime's atrocities with Marxism.

Like the Sakharov of 1975, Amalrik is skeptical toward the possibility of "socialism with a human face." Socialism with bared and bended knees may be likely, he claims, but not socialism with a human face. Why Amalrik takes this view is unclear. He concedes that the short-lived "Prague Spring" offered an example of humane socialism. Thanks to the Brezhnev Doctrine, however, Czechoslovakia soon reverted to socialism with bended knees. Had Soviet troops not intervened, Amalrik argues, the Czech regime would have abandoned its socialistic structure and would have embraced a "liberal-democratic" ideology. Amalrik implies that, at rock bottom, existing forms of socialism rely predominantly on force. Without the Soviet shadow, the bloc countries would presumably cast off communism in favor of a more democratic system.
Amalrik occasionally seems to accord Marxism a higher status than Stalinism and, unlike Solzhenitsyn, does not view Marxism and Stalinism as parts of a seamless ideological cloth. Amalrik defines Stalinism in the following manner:

> Marxism pulled through the needle's eye of Leninist theory of the seizure of power and Stalinist practice of holding on to it.

Though he distinguishes between Marxism and Stalinism, Amalrik seems to see few virtues in either. The comparison for him is not one between a humane ideology and its bastardization, but rather between a bad ideology and a worse one.

On the whole, Amalrik rejects socialism on the basis of very little thought. He does not painstakingly compare the socialist and capitalist systems in the manner of Sakharov. Amalrik's only comparative assessment appears when he claims that "within certain limits free private enterprise" is preferable to a strictly regimented socialist system. In order to grow, society must cherish some ideals. In this sense, Amalrik shares Sakharov's organic view of society. Once inspired by Marxist ideals, the Soviet system has discarded even these values and has become moribund. As Christianity postponed but could not prevent Rome's fall, so can Marxism forestall but not avert the decay of the Soviet order.

The Reformist Illusion

Amalrik wishes to dismiss once and for all the Russian notion that change can be effected by force only. In their opposition to the Soviet government, dissidents should not adopt terroristist tactics.
To do so would merely reinforce the Russian predilection for violence. The Soviet system and the Russian people are beyond hope of reform. The best that dissidents can do, Amalrik claims, is to save themselves.

Russians are a cursed people, Amalrik seems to be saying. Never will they harbor any laudable values. Never again will they feel a natural tie to their land. The self-regeneration of which Solzhenitsyn speaks is a hollow dream, Amalrik believes. Sakharov's belief in progress and liberalization is equally groundless. History, Amalrik argues, is neither a reasoned nor progress-oriented process. This is most true of Russia's history. What dissenters, Westerners, and quasi-dissidents now see as gradual democratization is really nothing more than the regime's growing ineptitude. Moreover, no overall plan underlies this so-called liberalization yet "liberalization presupposes some kind of purposeful plan." Again we see Amalrik's organic conception of society: nations are born, they grow, mature, decay and, eventually, die. The phrase "body politic" reflects Amalrik's Spenglerian view of history. As the Soviet system is beset with its own seeds of decay, the logical result of this process will be death, followed by anarchy.

Traditional peasant apathy is one obstacle to reform. Amalrik views the Russian peasantry as the repository of ignorance, conservatism, and blind obedience. Ingrained by years of servitude under the Mongol, Czarist and Soviet yokes, these qualities stifle any hope of reform or revolution "from below." Nor will the middle class go beyond its "passive discontent" to change society. Most Russians are resigned to their fate and are convinced that change is impossible.
Russians criticize, are unwilling to generalize, and are unable to imagine living under any other kind of system.

As Amalrik believes that ideological debate precedes political struggle, so does he claim that the current dissident ferment presages eventual civil conflict. If the Soviet leaders try to crush the dissident movement, terrorist acts will become more frequent and less isolated. Violence is inevitable, destruction Russia's fate. Violence will result, not in beneficial change, but in anarchy. In his pessimism toward the possibility of any beneficial change, Amalrik is an anomaly among dissidents. Neither Sakharov nor Solzhenitsyn are glowing optimists, yet they both believe that the system may be changed for the better. Perhaps it is because of this pessimism and resignation that Amalrik offers no formal model of the ideal society. He clearly believes that any such plan would be utopian in the literal sense of the term—i.e., existing nowhere.

The Peasantry

Amalrik's disenchantment with Russia's peasantry is born of personal experience. In his vilification of the peasant, Amalrik departs from the populist strain found in much Russian political thought. Like Solzhenitsyn, Amalrik exposes himself to the charge of elitism. What is it about the peasantry that Amalrik dislikes?

One of the first qualities Amalrik observed during his Siberian sojourn was the peasants's conservatism. Since these people own very little, they are even more loath to risk what they have. The last thing a peasant wants to do, therefore, is to jeopardize his standing by asserting his rights and thereby antagonizing the leadership.
fewer the possessions, the deeper the conservatism. Solzhenitsyn argued that he who owns little is beyond the State's grasp. Amalrik counters that he who owns little is even more manipulable. For Solzhenitsyn, asceticism allowed for various degrees of self-denial. For Amalrik, asceticism seems to be an all or nothing commitment—only by owning nothing can one flout the state.

Tempering the peasant's conservatism, however, is his pliability. He will obey any order. Were the Soviet leaders to declare tomorrow that agriculture was to be organized around private land holdings, the peasants would quickly conform. If, on the next day, the Politburo announced the abolition of private plots, the peasantry would just as quickly toe the line. The peasantry is like so large a lump of clay, easily shaped by official decree.

Clearly, Amalrik does not share the Russian intelligentsia's traditional love of the narod. Worse than their pliability is the peasants' hypocrisy, Amalrik argues. After complaining about his rigorous life, the peasant will show a fondness for the system and will admit being unable to conceive of living under anything but an authoritarian order. The peasant, like the world-weary intellectual whom Amalrik also excoriates, always has to complain about something.

The peasantry possesses no shortage of despicable qualities in Involuntary Journey. Narrow-minded, filthy, lewd—these epithets describe the typical peasant, Amalrik believes. The historian is appalled by the peasant's stupidity. In East-West: A Dialogue in Suzdal, Amalrik offers the following dose of provincial "logic," an
example he would have us believe to be typical. A rural prison warden "reasons":

If we had brothels, there'd be no adultery, all this lying would stop, and most important of all, family bonds would be strengthened. So you see, we provincials know a thing or two as well.\^4\^4

Amalrik's sarcasm toward the peasantry probably stems from his exposure to them while he was an exiled "parasite."\^4\^5 Disdain for the peasantry underlies Amalrik's pessimism regarding the prospects of beneficial change.

What Amalrik conveys in his assessment of the peasantry, however, may be nothing more than a firsthand account of the age-old conflict between the intellectual and the uneducated, between the urbanite and the rustic.\^4\^6 The fact that Amalrik concedes the peasantry a prominent role in any reform scheme is, in an ironic sense, a compliment to their group. In spite of himself, Amalrik often reveals a typical Russian reverence for the peasant ideal, even if he now criticizes its motley representatives. But Amalrik does not save all of his scorn for the peasantry. The intelligentsia serves as another group which arouses Amalrik's bile.

The Intelligentsia

Amalrik dislikes the word "intelligentsia." He believes the word is too vague, and prefers to talk in terms of the middle class. Still, it is clear as to what types of people Amalrik includes in this educated stratum: academics, artists, engineers, lawyers, doctors, and students. Amalrik's definition of this class is broader than Solzhenitsyn's and Sakharov's.
a revolution in peasant attitudes, the middle class, were it not so moribund, could implement change.

The intelligentsia mirrors many of the same faults of the peasantry in Amalrik's view. For instance, Soviet intellectuals are largely naive. They accept the reformist notion of a gradually improving life. They blithely talk of "thaws" and "liberalization" and believe, contrary to all facts, that "things are getting better." What Amalrik calls the "ideology of reformism" constitutes one of the three major groups comprising the dissident movement.

Like the main character in Dostoevsky's Notes From Underground, Amalrik distinguishes between the man of thought and the man of action. The cautious, contemplative, and scholarly milieu of the intelligent is inimical to decisive action, Amalrik believes. Dostoevsky's misfit refers to people "who think and therefore do nothing."

In Is Uncle Jack a Conformist?, the political activist probably echoes Amalrik's sentiments when he exclaims, "Intellectuals are impotent!" The poet in My Aunt is Living in Volokolamsk is the play's sole representative of the creative intelligentsia. This lame intellect serves alternately as a mouthpiece for the regime and as an inarticulate fool. Neither image casts a flattering reflection upon the Soviet intelligentsia. The latter class is paralyzed along with the peasantry, albeit for different reasons. Amalrik endorses the timeworn dichotomy between action and thought. Too absorbed in "speculative thought," the Soviet intellectual lacks the pragmatism needed for effective reform, Amalrik argues.

Neither is hypocrisy an exclusively peasant trait. In
East-West: A Dialogue in Suzdal, a young student eager for a liaison with his aging mistress complains of a filthy man who happens to share their room. The matron, who welcomes the presence of a potential customer, chides the intellectual: "You're even more of a moralist than a reformed prostitute." Mendacity seeps from society's every pore in Amalrik's chronicles. In My Aunt is Living in Volokolamsk, the professor claims to be an intellectual, yet there are no books to be found either on his shelves or in his apartment. A group so concerned with appearances over substance could never serve as the vanguard of reform.

Even if the intelligentsia was more energetic and sincere, it is too elitist in its attitudes (Amalrik may be his own best example) to carry its message to the people. "The intelligentsia," he notes, "most of whom have barely 'come out from the people,' do not want to 'go to the people.'" The intellectual class comes off very poorly in Amalrik's plays. Intellectuals are objects of derision. So estranged is he from the intelligentsia that he muses, probably in a flight of hyperbole, that this class "as a whole is an even more unpleasant phenomenon than the regime that formed it." Amalrik's intelligent is a contemptible creature—impotent, naive, arrogant, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

The Dissident Task

Amalrik does not equate the intelligentsia with the dissident movement. This latter group, though more decisive and desirous of reform, is nevertheless beset with its own internal fissures. The dissident movement grew out of two developments which followed Stalin's death. First, the Soviet ruling circles split into
factions favoring or opposing democratization. The jockeying for position which followed Stalin's death allowed for the emergence of an opposition movement of sorts. This movement also had spokesmen within the highest Party and state echelons. Second, the growth of samizdat was an added impetus for the dissident movement, Amalrik believes. After Stalin, vigilance in cultural matters slackened and samizdat spread, fostering a sense of community among heretofore disparate and unknown persons.

Opposition to the Soviet regime has coalesced around three ideological axes. These are neo-Marxism/Leninism, Christianity, and Liberalism. Neo-Marxists, of which Roy Medvedev is an example, try to recover and implement the original Marxist ideals which Soviet practice has discarded. Christian ideologists, represented by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, wish to create a religious state, if not a state religion. Liberals such as Yuri Orlov and Andrei Sakharov embrace a reformist policy, seeking to transform Russia into a Western-oriented and democratic state. Amalrik concedes that the phrase "dissident movement" is misleading, given the diversity of thought which this term conceals. Yet Amalrik sees as the common denominator of all these dissident factions a respect for the rule of law and an esteem for the individual.

Nevertheless, even this is a slender reed upon which to rely for positive reform. For the dissident movement retains many of the flaws which hamstring the intelligentsia in general—naïveté, elitism, circumspection. The dissident campaign remains largely a middle class effort, Amalrik notes. And most middle class citizens are relatively satisfied with their lot.
Moreover, the dissident movement asks people to act, to take a stand—a request which makes most "loyal citizens" uncomfortable. Overall, the movement is too tiny and disorganized to agitate for an effective reform of the system.

Still, Amalrik feels that for all of its weaknesses, the dissident movement is resilient, has weathered many storms, and will weather many more. Ironically, the state needs a dissident movement within the Soviet Union. To justify its existence, the KGB requires suspects. Like any interest group, "the KGB wants to show the party chiefs its importance and indispensability." By succeeding in quashing all "subversive elements," therefore, the KGB would doom itself. Just as the roles of victim and executioner are inseparable, so is there a dialectic relationship between the dissidents and the security organs.

Morals and Values

Russia's nihilism is one cause of her downfall. In his quest to recover values in a skeptical era, Amalrik resembles both Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov. Unlike the latter dissident, Amalrik the moralist is also Amalrik the loner and he is willing to join no movement. Some commentators consider Amalrik's 1981 to be a rebuttal to Machiavelli's *Prince*, as the dissident argues that politics is not solely a matter of power, not only a question of the state. Amalrik's satire and irony can easily overshadow the moral message of his fiction. But despite his self-deprecation, "Amalrik's own idealism cannot be doubted," Daniel Weissbort notes.

Older notions of right and wrong have now been supplanted
by the idea of "class morality"—the view that those actions which benefit the proletariat are ethical. Since the regime arrogates to itself the right to define "benefit," class morality proves to be an elastic concept which will sanction any action deemed to be for the good of the cause. Class morality crushes the individual, for the latter must subordinate himself to the interest of the collective. By arguing that class rights and "social justice" are paramount, as they now do with regard to the Helsinki human rights provisions, the Soviet rulers admit that they view man as an instrument.

Russian attitudes have reinforced this notion of class rights, itself a type of moral relativism. Amalrik believes that most Russians equate freedom with disorder. Western ideals such as self-determination and liberty are alien to the Russian mind. Justice is the only value that is firmly entrenched in Russian thought. This is the one value that the citizenry expects the state to revere. Yet even this reverence has a dark side. Amalrik contends that the Russian view of justice is simply expressed by the determination that "no one will be better off than me." This is a negative type of justice, despising excellence and producing mediocrity. Far from saving Russia from moral sterility, this view of justice "represents the most destructive aspect of Russian psychology," Amalrik contends.

The few ideals that the masses cherish are antagonistic to democracy. The confidence in violent change has already been noted. Russians also denigrate individual initiative and have always viewed man as a means to an end, something to be used. Human life is
dispensable, not inviolate. The authoritarian lifestyle, not just Soviet oppression, is the source of Russia’s present malaise. Like Tocqueville, Amalrik argues that democratic institutions are less important than a democratic lifestyle among the citizenry.\textsuperscript{66} Reorganizing the kolkhoz in yet another fashion is thus useless. Revolutionizing public attitudes, jettisoning the intellectual baggage left over from the past—only this will effect positive change, but Amalrik considers such reform unlikely.

**Intellectual Freedom**

If the individual cannot reform the system, he can at least save himself by refusing to submit to arbitrary authority. Amalrik, like Solzhenitsyn, distinguishes between inner and outer freedom and, also like Solzhenitsyn, believes the former liberty to be most important.

What, in effect, threatened the Russian writer if, before the first visit abroad, he had refused to collaborate with the KGB? The writer would not have gone abroad, but he would have remained an honest man. In refusing to collaborate he would have lost a part, perhaps a considerable part, of his external freedom, but he would have achieved greater inner freedom.\textsuperscript{67}

The Storyteller in *The Fourteen Lovers of Ugly Mary-Ann* exclaims,

\begin{quote}
One should never make the mistake of thinking one’s a free man in this country! One is subject to moral pressure even at one’s desk, writing stories.\textsuperscript{68}
\end{quote}

External freedom includes the freedom to travel and to perform those physical activities that one desires. Inner freedom is freedom of thought, if not necessarily expression. In true individualist form, Amalrik has lived his ideals by writing what he wants, with scant regard for the wishes, conventions, or rules of the governing elite.\textsuperscript{69}
Individualism

Refusing to obey the state, declining formal membership in the democratic movement, Amalrik is the loner's loner. He refused to conform with minor regulations while in prison. Antagonizing guards and fellow prisoners alike with his intractability, Amalrik was an island unto himself. In *Involuntary Journey* he writes what may well be a succinct description of his whole life: "I had never believed in being 'like everybody else' and I refused to give in." Central to Amalrik's political thought is an intense individualism, the belief in the need to assert one's rights.

Even if the Soviet rulers deny that men are born with natural rights, the Soviet Constitution guarantees many liberties. It is the individual's task to hold the state to the letter of the law. Natural rights, Amalrik believes, include the free expression of ideas and freedom of movement. But these liberties have been shelved in favor of "class rights" in communist states and "national rights" in the Third World. By asserting one's rights, one reaffirms one's human dignity in the face of oppression.

Amalrik is no joiner. Few petitions bear his name. Few political trials are graced with his presence. An abrasive man, Amalrik has irritated the organized dissident movement almost as much as he has taunted the regime. In contrast to Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn, Amalrik wages no campaign. Russia's fate is foreordained, he believes. All that a man can do, therefore, is salvage his own integrity. Amalrik certainly believes, in Aristotelian fashion, that it is possible to be a good man in a bad state. But he does not join in the fashionable pastime of sneering at patriotism. Rather,
Amalrik claims that by fostering critical discussion, he helps the regime and is more of a patriot than those who blindly obey.

Rule of Law

Law, Amalrik believes, is the means by which the individual keeps oppression at bay. It does little good to resist tyrants by appealing to lofty values. Instead, one should quote the regime's own laws back at one's oppressors. Freedom of speech, religion, and assembly—these liberties are enshrined in the Soviet Constitution. Make the state abide by them in practice, Amalrik urges.

The regime should realize, Amalrik reasons, that its disdain for strict observance of the law is not in its own interest. When laws can be flouted, the leader must always be wary of plots against his rule. Ever-vigilant force is all that sustains him. As long as laws are nothing more but scraps of paper, the ruler is vulnerable to the next claimant who possesses superior force. No one can feel safe when a state violates its own laws.

What is needed, Amalrik believes, is not some "grand design" for Russia in the manner of Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, not new laws, nor stricter ones, but enforcement of existing statutes. Dissidents would do better to spend their time studying the present laws and devising ways law can be used to protect colleagues. Law is a sacred instrument to Amalrik. It expresses, or should express, man's mores and a respect for man's rights. To Amalrik, laws represent the accumulated wisdom of the ages, "the ethical standards that mankind has arrived at during its long history." Perhaps this legalistic pedantry will not defeat the state. But at least the dissident will
not have given up without a fight. In the process, the state will be frustrated, perhaps tire of persecuting individuals, and the hypocrisy of its laws will be exposed to the world.

**The Soviet Apocalypse**

The doomsday prophet's role is not an easy one, least of all when it is one's own country which is doomed. Yet what Amalrik offers is nothing less than a Soviet and Russian *Goetterdaemerung*, an apocalyptic and fatalistic vision of doom. Because of its internal contradictions, the Russian state has entered its last decades. After all, what Amalrik depicts is not only the demise of the Soviet order but the collapse of Russian society as well. Notwithstanding the title of his treatise, Amalrik questions whether Russia, not just the Soviet Union, will last until 1981*. What are the seeds of Russia's decline and fall?

Inevitably, Russia will perish in the flames of a Sino-Soviet conflict. Any rapprochement between these countries is only temporary. Aside from their ideological squabbles, Russia and China have conflicting national interests all along their 6,000 mile common border. Russia has more sophisticated nuclear weaponry, but the Chinese have superior manpower. The prison warden in *East-West: A Dialogue in Suzdal* muses uneasily:

> It would take a whole lifetime to mow down all the Chinese with a Tommy gun, there are so many of the buggers. Those up top ought to give that a thought or two.??

Any success over the Chinese would be a Pyrrhic victory only, so numerous are the orientals.

The Sino-Soviet rift aids the dissident movement, since fear
of the "Asian menace" pushes Russia closer to the West. Criticism of Chinese communism also reflects poorly upon Soviet socialism. In such a manner does this cause of Soviet decay feed upon itself and grow.79

Until the final confrontation, however, several other factors will undermine the regime. Simple biological forces dictate the eventual extinction of the current Soviet gerontocracy.80 Nearly all of the Politburo members are in their 70's. As they age, bureaucratic infighting will intensify. Nikolai Podgorny's sudden demotion may be a case in point. Neither are there any heirs apparent who might succeed a Brezhnev or a Kosygin. When these men die, an unprecedented power struggle will occur and will weaken the already decaying order.

While the current leaders try to keep themselves in power they must also heed, or at least cannot ignore, cries for reform. Yet with reform comes change and uncertainty. This is especially true in the all-important area of economic policy. "In order to remain in power, the regime must change and evolve, but in order to preserve itself, everything must remain unchanged."81 With this tension between self-maintenance and reform comes one source of Russia's decline and fall.

Marxism no longer inspires the masses, so a new ideology must be found. The likely alternative, Amalrik predicts, will be Russian nationalism.82 Only a new or different ideology will spur the masses on to greater labors. But this turn to Russian nationalism will likewise alienate many non-Russian nationalities. Only
about 53 percent of the Soviet population is ethnically Russian. Significantly, the birthrate for non-Russian nationalities is much higher than it is for ethnic Russians. Rallying the populace around the Russian flag might only revive feelings of local nationalism in many other regions. Supplanting socialist ideology, Russian nationalism will sow the seeds of its own dissolution.

And as the system needs scientific successes for purposes of power and prestige, so do these same successes eat away at the foundation of the regime's authority. The more sophisticated the scientific advance, the starker will be the contrast between the exploiters and exploited in Soviet society. Scientific progress also needs free inquiry. Cultivating a scientific elite is necessary for economic development, but it also runs the risk of having free-thinking scientists train their intellects on existing political problems. Scientific inquiry cannot exist in a vacuum. Rather, the critical spirit will seep into other facets of life and will challenge the Party's claim of infallibility.

These five factors—Sino-Soviet conflict, gerontocratic rule, the conflict between stability and reform, between identity and particularism, between scientific advance and official pretensions—make it unclear as to whether either the Soviet rulers or the Russian people will survive until 1984. As the Sino-Soviet conflict begins to simmer, various nationalities will declare their independence, the Soviet satellites in East Europe will strike out on their own, and the resulting human costs will dwarf those incurred in the "Great Patriotic War." What Amalrik offers is not so much a prediction as a prophecy, not so much a plan as a vision. More than
Solzhenitsyn or Sakharov, Amalrik serves as a Russian Cassandra, offering not analysis but a glimpse of Russia as a cursed country.

Critical Evaluation

Since he harbors no grand conception regarding Russia's future or the ideal society, Amalrik presents a smaller target for criticism than Solzhenitsyn or Sakharov. Nevertheless, a few points must be discussed.

Since a prophecy does not derive its validity from thorough documentation, trying to disprove it by amassing facts is a bit like trying to hunt deer with a fishing pole. Still, Amalrik's gloom regarding the Russian/Soviet system may be unwarranted. His proof of peasant ineptitude, for example, is largely anecdotal and smacks of hasty generalization. So appalled by peasant coarseness is this urban sophisticate that he abandons all hope of reform. But how many peasants did Amalrik really know? Can he be so sure that these were representative of the peasantry as a whole? In his quickness to condemn this entire class, does Amalrik not exhibit the same ugly strain of elitism which he condemns in the intelligentsia?

The Soviet system may be more resilient than Almarik thinks. Not all Politburo members are bearded ancients. A few possible successors to Brezhnev, such as Dmitri Ustinov and Andrei Kirilenko, are in their 60's or late 50's. The system has weathered succession struggles before. Why should it be unable to do so now? Perhaps such a struggle might even pave the way for more cultural diversity and freedom, the way the post-Stalin crisis was followed by the first "thaw."
Granted that the regime needs a new idiom to inspire masses. It does not follow from this, however, that the symbol must be Great Russian nationalism. The ruling circles are well aware of the touchy nationality problem, and for them it aggravate it by appealing to an alienating symbol is improbable. Soviet nationalism, not Russian chauvinism, may be the likely replacement for proletarian internationalism. Or an emphasis on consumer values may provide another unifying idiom. In any case, the "contradiction" of which Amalrik speaks may not be so profound. Thus does he underestimate the system's resiliency.

Regarding the "contradiction" inherent in scientific progress, Amalrik may also miss the mark. All Amalrik proves is that scientists may try to infuse their habit of free inquiry into the political realm, not that they will indeed be successful in this endeavor. He proves only that restricting critical thought to science is difficult, not that it is impossible. Thus far, in a record which spans six decades and impressive scientific achievements, the regime has successfully insulated politics from the influence of reform-minded, free-thinking scientists. As we noted in our discussion of Sakharov, the scientist's entry into the political realm will be controlled by the Party and will be on the Party's terms. Anyway, scientists are among those whom Amalrik classified earlier as the impotent intelligentsia. How then can Amalrik consistently argue that scientists, by force of will, may become the vanguard of reform?

Nor is it so obvious that a Sino-Soviet war is inevitable. Who can say what will emerge in the way of Sino-Soviet policy once
the post-Mao leadership stabilizes. Importantly, Soviet broadsides have been calculated to attack Mao and not the Chinese people. Provocative rhetoric aside, it is doubtful that either country desires war or truly believes there could be anything resembling a "winner" emerging from the rubble. Who is to say that a Sino-Soviet détente is impossible? World politics has seen stranger things. Former American Ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew once stated that "war with Soviet Russia is as certain as anything could be." That was 30 years ago. If the intervening decades do not deserve the appellation "peace," neither can they honestly be described as war. Who could have foreseen the recent Soviet-American détente 30 years ago? How can Amalrik cavalierly discount a Sino-Soviet rapprochement for now and forever more?

If war comes, the result may not be so apocalyptic as Amalrik suggests. If Russia could not win such a conflict, she could probably at least avoid losing it. Amalrik writes as though nations die. This simply does not happen, though, least of all to a nation of 240 million people, a country which straddles the world's largest political land mass. Russia will survive, notwithstanding Amalrik's dramatic notion of Armageddon.

There is one quality in the Russian national character which Amalrik conveniently ignores--resiliency. Amalrik himself catalogs the succession of conquerors that the Russians have outlasted--Vikings, Mongols, Turks, Nazis. Perhaps the Russians will cast off the shackles of Soviet tyranny too. Perhaps only a conflict with China, with its attendant destruction, could prompt such an awakening. Great changes and surprises are not new to this land, and Amalrik's confident vision of gloom may yet be torn
asunder. It was Peter the Great who characterized Russia as a "country in which things that just don't happen happen." Like Amalrik, Peter the Great embraced traditional Western values. Like Amalrik, Peter the Great railed against "typical Russian narrowness." And like Amalrik, Peter the Great underestimated the resilience of that vast land--Russia.

**Conclusion**

What we are left with is more of a vision than an ideology, more a mood than a philosophy. What Andrew MacAndrew wrote of Dostoevsky can be applied to Amalrik as well:

> It is impossible to make a philosophical system out of [his] world. It is full of contradictions, inconsistencies, absurdities. It is a universal projection of the human soul speaking in many clashing voices.

He is a seer, a prophet, an exile. Living in the Netherlands, Amalrik still writes of that which he knows best--Russia. Forever the loner, he laments the plight of the Soviet dissident and the endangered ideals for which they stand. Amalrik contrasts vividly with most other dissidents. Pessimism, fatalism--these qualities make him an anomaly within the democratic opposition. Yet throughout Amalrik's thought runs the characteristic dissident esteem for morality and for the sanctity of the individual. Discord and unity--such is the tenor of Amalrik's world view; such is the spirit of the dissident movement.
NOTES TO CHAPTER IV


5 Ibid., pp. 37-38.

6 Ibid., p. 40.

7 Ibid., p. 58.


10 Ibid., p. 19.


14 Ibid.


18 Amalrik, Involuntary Journey to Siberia, p. 158.
NOTES TO CHAPTER IV (continued)

19. Ibid., p. 122

20. Ibid.


23. Amalrik, Involuntary Journey to Siberia, p. 34.


27. Ibid., p. 29.


29. Ibid., p. 5.


32. Amalrik, Involuntary Journey to Siberia, foreword.

33. Hayward, p. xi.


35. Ibid., p. 30.

36. Ibid., p. 31.


NOTES TO CHAPTER IV (continued)

141 Amalrik, Involuntary Journey to Siberia, p. 169.
142 Ibid.
143 Ibid., p. 168.
150 Amalrik, My Aunt is Living in Volokolamsk, p. 10.
151 Amalrik, "Dissidents' Fate Turns on Kremlin Power Struggle," p. 33.
152 Quoted in Kamm, p. v.
154 Ibid., pp. 9-10.
157 Amalrik, "Dissidents' Fate Turns on Kremlin Power Struggle," p. 33.
160 Weissbort, p. x.
162 Ibid., p. 34.
NOTES TO CHAPTER IV (continued)

63. Ibid., p. 33.
64. Ibid., p. 35.
65. Ibid., p. 34.
66. Revel, p. 93.
67. quoted in Kamm, pp. ix-x.
70. Amalrik, Involuntary Journey to Siberia, p. 122.
71. Hayward, p. xi.
73. Hayward, pp. xi-xii.
75. Ibid., p. 113.
76. Ibid., p. 112.
80. Ibid., p. C1.
82. Ibid., p. 38.
83. Ibid., p. 66.
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CHAPTER V

THE DISSIDENT DIALOGUE

There are many reasons why dissident views regarding East-West relations deserve separate treatment. First, the dissidents have given this subject so much thought that including their opinions along with their critique of the Soviet system would have interrupted the primary focus of their dissent. Second, such a spirited debate surrounds the topic that it is worthy of special emphasis. This emphasis will reinforce our thesis that the dissident movement is heterogeneous. Third, the flow of argument is more accurately represented in a separate section. Dividing the dissident debate into three different sections would interrupt the continuity of the discussion, would be needlessly repetitive, and would distort the contrapuntal quality of the dissident dialogue.

Let us therefore discuss the dissidents' views regarding East-West relations and consider the internal dissension found within the dissident movement.

Solzhenitsyn on East-West Relations

Though he is a newcomer to the West, Solzhenitsyn offers some timely insights. Looking to the West, the novelist dislikes what he sees. But he insists that he is not a critic of the West, only a critic of the West's shortcomings. Absorbed in the pursuit of
material comfort and lacking the will to defend any values, the Western world now crumbles before the Soviet challenge, he feels. The West's demise is rooted in the Enlightenment idea that "man is the measure of all things." As society become increasingly secular, men start to think that existence itself is the highest good. Moral principles are dismissed and replaced by the notion that men have no ethical responsibility to any higher power. The slavish devotion to comfort and the attachment to worldly goods has sucked all moral fiber out of the West. For Solzhenitsyn, the "spirit of Munich" survives as the West feebly capitulates to Soviet demands rather than hazard its precious affluence.

Western liberals particularly attract Solzhenitsyn's scorn. He recalls that in 1947, most Western liberals indignantly denied the existence of concentration camps in Russia. Solzhenitsyn reserves special contempt for leftist dilettantes such as Jean-Paul Sartre, who can claim with a straight face that "Marxism is the unsurpassable philosophy of our era." In Bertrand Russell's addage, "I'd rather be Red than dead," Solzhenitsyn detects a chilling lack of principle. Russell, Solzhenitsyn suspects, would rather be anything—a slave, an accomplice in crime—than dead.

Throughout his critique of the West, Solzhenitsyn sustains a tone of apocalyptic gloom. This is in contrast to Amalrik, who reserves such dark imagery for Russia and not the West. Consider these words from Solzhenitsyn's Warning to the West: "I wouldn't be surprised at the sudden and imminent fall of the West." Similarly, in his Letter to the Soviet Leaders he claims that, as a moral challenge to
the Soviet Union, "the Western world . . . has almost ceased to exist." Russia's troubled period from March to November 1917, he argues, is merely a condensed version of the West's current plight. Unfortunately, one can no longer count on the West for moral leadership. Russian dissidents must thus steer their own course and not depend on Western assistance. In this respect, Solzhenitsyn crosses swords with Andrei Sakharov, who believes that the West must nudge the Soviet Union for any liberalization to occur.

Like Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West* in the 1920's, Solzhenitsyn's warnings fall on a reluctant audience. Indeed, Solzhenitsyn's approach, like Amalrik's, is somewhat Spenglerian. Both believe that history unfolds in circular patterns and that civilizations undergo birth and death. Yet one does not find the same determinism in Solzhenitsyn that one notes in Spengler and Amalrik. Certainly Solzhenitsyn does not believe that the West is doomed, or else he would not bother to sound the alarm. When he attempts to raise the level of Western consciousness, Solzhenitsyn dabbles in the Hegelian business of aufheben. "In spite of his ignorance of the ways of the West, and some jarring notes in his message to it," Solzhenitsyn has succeeded in his task, Leopold Labedz notes.

Genuine détente, Solzhenitsyn believes, precludes ideological warfare. He is not an opponent of détente, but is a foe of a certain type of détente. As long as the West is vilified daily in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, détente is meaningless. As long as the Soviet oligarchy verbally or materially supports so-called wars of national liberation in Africa, détente is meaningless. As a Roman Senator closed each
speech by saying that "Carthage must be destroyed," so does the Soviet media, under the guise of détente, hurl a stream of invective at the West. Solzhenitsyn favors détente, but a different type of détente nonetheless. 11 Under the present relaxation of tensions, the West is being duped. Oppression in many communist countries intensified, he claims, after the 1975 Helsinki agreement was signed. What appeasement was in 1938, Solzhenitsyn argues, détente is in 1977.

Unwittingly, the West aids Soviet tyranny by supplying the communists with valuable technology and food. As long as the United States trades with the Soviet Union, liberalization will be stalled and dissidents will still be persecuted. Solzhenitsyn's argument is timely. Vladimir Bukovsky claims that when he was kept in a psychiatric prison in Russia, he wore handcuffs upon which was inscribed, "made in the U.S.A." If the West stops aiding the tormentors of the Russian people, the regime must liberalize and abandon senseless space and military projects. 12 Western resolve could make a difference, even if it could not "reform" Russia in the manner of Sakharov. Instead of worrying about nuclear war, the West should take less dramatic but more effective steps to meet the Soviet challenge. As it stands now, Solzhenitsyn argues, there will be no nuclear war, for the Soviets will demoralize and subdue the West long before any Armageddon is necessary.

Unlike Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn dismisses the whole notion of East-West convergence. The ideological and philosophical differences separating the two systems show no signs of being bridged. 13 In an age of emerging nationalism in the Third World and revived nationalism in developed countries, all this talk of convergence is
absurd, Solzhenitsyn believes. Even if the systems could grow to re­semble each other, this is not necessarily desirable. Nations, he claims, are natural and beneficial entities. "Nations are the wealth of humanity," and their cultural diversity enriches the world.

Internationalism—the belief that no major problem can be solved at the national level—is a chimera. Here again, Solzhenitsyn disagrees with Sakharov, who views the nation-state as an atavism. Esperanto will never replace national languages, Solzhenitsyn notes, and anyone who thinks that it will is naive.

Nationalism wedded to the concept of sovereignty, however, has had some pernicious effects. Sovereignty—the idea that a state has the right to do anything it wants in its own internal affairs—has become the modern handmaiden of oppression. Because of this notion of the inviolability of internal affairs, the West is criticized for verbally supporting Soviet dissidents (but the Soviet Union may make a cult heroine out of Angela Davis). Because of this notion, the Organization of African Unity watches Idi Amin terrorize his own people (but Rhodesia is condemned for its "intolerable racism"). Because of this attitude, Czechoslovakia may jail dissidents with impunity (but when Francoist Spain shoots Basque terrorists, this is a crime against humanity and Europe recalls its ambassadors). There exists no such thing as strictly "internal affairs," Solzhenitsyn claims. Freedom is indivisible. Once repression is tolerated just because it occurs within a country's own borders against its own citizens, freedom elsewhere is jeopardized. Why should oppression be sanctioned merely because it occurs within
some arbitrarily drawn and historically shifting boundary? In a world that is morally as well as economically interdependent, "internal affairs" is a phrase which tries to mask brutality.

Thus does Solzhenitsyn detach the concept of nationalism from the principle of absolute sovereignty. Similarly, he distinguishes between patriotism and blind obedience to the state. One can love one's country without being a chauvinist. He rejects the current version of détente but does not sound the tocsin for a renewed Cold War. Many persons have aimed these groundless criticisms at Solzhenitsyn, however. All he asks is that the West at least stop aiding Soviet tyranny. Sakharov believes the West can do more than this.

**Sakharov on East-West Relations**

International Relations

In the early stages of his political thought, Sakharov seems to favor a balance of power approach to world politics. That is to say, he believed that a rough equivalency in power between the two superpowers was conducive to global stability. For this reason, he had no qualms about developing an H-bomb for Stalin, even though he recognized Stalin's faults. Nuclear bipolarity would be more stable than a nuclear monopoly. Sakharov wanted the Soviet Union to match, but not necessarily overtake, the West in military might.

As his appeals for a reduction in weapons testing fell on deaf ears, Sakharov's views changed. He began to criticize the "empirical-competitive" approach to modern diplomacy. Simply stated, this approach dictates that each nation advance its own interest to the greatest extent and, likewise, cause its adversary the greatest
unpleasantness. Sakharov decries the idea that international diplomacy be seen as a "zero-sum game." Rather, he advocates a "demographic perspective," a view of international relations which has the common lot of mankind as its starting point. This perspective demands that the world be viewed as a family rather than as so many ideological camps. The demographic view must transcend nationalism and embrace the principle of peaceful coexistence. In a nuclear age, Sakharov argues, preaching the exclusivity of ideologies is "madness and a crime." Problems of pollution, militarism, and economic development are common to all parts of the globe. These ills will be surmounted only by shaking off the particularistic pretensions of the nation-state system.

Mankind's first priority, Sakharov believes, should be the avoidance of nuclear war. After 1945, he became convinced that we no longer live in a socialist world or a capitalist world, but a nuclear world. In an atomic war, none of the combatants can "win" in a conventional sense of the word. Pyrrhic victory is the best possible outcome. The sheer destructiveness of nuclear weapons prevents modern warfare from being a rational instrument of policy. Nuclear weapons render obsolete the Clausewitzian conception of war. War is now a form of universal suicide, not "a continuation of diplomacy by other means."

At least two assumptions undergird Sakharov's ideas regarding modern warfare. First, he discounts the idea of a limited nuclear war. Sakharov is one of many analysts who argue that once nuclear weapons of any size or number are deployed, the conflict will escalate. Second, Sakharov believes that any conflict between the superpowers will be a nuclear and not a conventional clash.
The threat of nuclear holocaust is so horrible, Sakharov argues, that the prevention of this calamity takes precedence over all other problems. Most people, he believes, would prefer anything to nuclear war. Even the victory of an adversary is preferable to war. World government and universal disarmament are feasible because they are so necessary, he reasons.

Regarding the Third World, Sakharov urges that arms-producing states embargo weapon sales to developing countries. Weapons cause wars, Sakharov believes. "Historical experience testifies to the fact that when cannons are at hand, they will sooner or later begin to shoot." This is a clear retreat from his 1953 view that nuclear bipolarity helps stabilize international relations.

Aside from urging the Third World to demilitarize, Sakharov advises the Third World to stop blaming all of its problems on other countries. Labels of "colonialism" and "neo-colonialism" are now used to forestall reform and self-help on the part of poor states. Sakharov calls for the less developed nations to "restructure their national psychologies" and to accept the responsibility for their own plight. Only when such a change in thinking occurs will the gap between rich and poor countries be narrowed.

Convergence and Détente

Like Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov favors détente, but prefers a different type of détente. In the past, he feels, détente has been little more than a modus vivendi between the US and the USSR. The relaxation of foreign tensions has been valued while any relaxation of domestic oppression has been avoided. But Sakharov insists that
meaningful détente must, among other things, democratize Soviet so-

Détente reflects, at least in part, the Soviet need for
class. Otherwise, rapprochement will amount to little more than "an

sophisticated technology. Without Western computer systems, for in-

Detente is thus a signal to and an opportunity for the West
to nudge Russia in the direction of democratic reform. What levers
can the West use to promote this development? Sakharov endorses a

"partial boycott of scientific and cultural contacts" or embargoes on
certain types of technology. Food embargoes, credit denial, and
cancellation of arms negotiations are inadmissible levers, Sakharov
argues. Since it is only the détente relationship which makes lever-
age feasible, Sakharov rejects any return to Cold War tensions. Yet
détente must not become a process of capitulation to Soviet demands and
must encourage democratization.

Aside from promoting human rights in the Soviet Union, détente
should also aim at containing and avoiding local conflicts. The
Middle East is one area, Sakharov believes, where the superpowers
should show more restraint. Similarly, supporting so-called "wars of
national liberation" is incompatible with détente and exemplifies
the "empirical-competitive" approach that Sakharov condemns. Occasion-
ally, Sakharov expands détente's aims to include the democratization of
all socialist countries, not just his own. Sakharov shares Solz-
henitsyn's view that détente is indivisible, that the relaxation of
tensions must not end at the Soviet border but must also induce some
measure of toleration within Russia as well.
It is vital to think of détente in terms of the West and the Soviet Union rather than just between the US and the USSR. If the latter perspective is endorsed, détente will fail. Only Western solidarity will enable détente to induce Soviet reform. Too often the Western countries have been divided with regard to Soviet policies. For this reason, American attempts at outright linkage between human rights and trade relations have failed. The Soviets have merely looked elsewhere for eager customers and too many concessions have thus been made. Western pressure on the Soviet Union is only as strong as its weakest link. Western unity is thus a prerequisite for effective détente.

In 1977, Sakharov argues that disarmament "must have priority over all other problems." This is a drastic shift from his 1975 view that arms control was but one of many aims of détente. Sakharov grows increasingly alarmed at the growing nuclear stockpiles of both superpowers. For this reason he favors a continuation of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. Still, Sakharov rejects the notion of unilateral disarmament. Not only would such a move not be reciprocated by the Soviets, but it would also be very destabilizing. Having a clear military advantage, the Soviet leaders would merely increase pressure on the West in volatile areas such as the Indian Ocean. Thus, while Sakharov views the current arms race as potentially disastrous, he seems to concede that a "balance of terror" deters irresponsible action in many instances.

Since Sakharov endorses a quid pro quo between Western trade and Soviet liberalization, it is not surprising that he applauded the
1974 Jackson Amendment. To Sakharov, Jackson's proposal was a "moral approach" consistent with "the ethical principles of American democracy." Of course, the Kremlin eventually rejected the entire Trade Reform Act. Many observers have concluded from this that ultimatums to the Soviet Union are ineffective and counterproductive. Such has been the "lesson" of the Jackson Amendment episode. The Amendment's rejection supposedly shows the futility of overt pressure as opposed to quiet diplomacy. Sakharov rejects this as a misreading of the episode.

Senator Jackson's proposal sought freer emigration for all Soviet citizens, not just Jews. While most observers have pointed to a recent reduction in emigration to "prove" the Amendment's failure, Sakharov notes that emigration of other ethnic groups has indeed increased since 1974. Critics of the Jackson Amendment ignore other important categories of emigration and select only the data that support their case. If the Jackson Amendment failed, Sakharov argues, it did not do so because it interfered with Russian internal affairs, but because the West lacked unity. Disheartened by America's demand, the Kremlin found eager and more obliging customers in, say, West Germany and France. Had other Western states resolutely supported the Jackson condition, Sakharov argues, the Amendment's success would have been assured. The "lesson" of the episode is not that conditions linking trade with human rights are ineffectual, but that Western unity is necessary for effective pressure.

Sakharov rejects the view that support for human rights constitutes meddling in Soviet internal affairs. When the Soviet leaders
signed the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights in 1948 and the Helsinki agreement in 1975, they themselves removed the human rights issue from the sole province of internal affairs. Far from meddling in Russia's domestic politics, the Jackson Amendment asked only that the Soviets honor in practice what they had already agreed to in principle. Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn concur in their view that the phrase "internal affairs" is usually a façade for oppression.

The West must make the violation of human rights "a political problem for the leaders of the culprit countries." Predictably, therefore, Sakharov is enthusiastic about President Jimmy Carter's verbal support for human rights. Even if such action constitutes interference in internal affairs, Sakharov believes Carter's policy is noble. Andrei Amalrik also shares Sakharov's enthusiasm for Carter's stand. When American Communist Party leader Gus Hall visits Leonid Brezhnev, no one complains. When the Soviet press seethes with indignation over the unspeakable cruelties inflicted upon Angela Davis, there is no crisis. When American imperialism and capitalism is denounced in Pravda as racist, the world takes this in stride. But let the American President issue a statement deploring the suppression of dissent, and listen to the barrage of criticism.

The double standard is as insidious as it is hypocritical. Soviet criticism of America's domestic politics is somehow permissible. But any American statement bordering on criticism of police state actions is thought to be naive, evangelical, moralistic, and dangerous! Incredibly, the Soviet leaders assume an indignant pose toward Carter's remarks and, in the next breath, reserve for themselves
the right to criticize America's domestic policies. Carl Linden, a Soviet Affairs specialist at George Washington University, notes that the Soviet rulers have "always felt free about attacking the foundations of Western democracy, so Carter's opening moves have really been a matter of playing the Soviet's own game."¹¹

Not all dissidents share Sakharov's view. The historian Roy Medvedev, for instance, disagrees. Like Solzhenitsyn, Medvedev claims that Russia's fate will ultimately be decided by Russians, not by outside pressure. Western public opinion is too faddish and transient to rely upon in pressing for liberalization.²² In the long run, Medvedev argues, détente will spur democratization. By offering embarrassing ultimatums, the West jeopardizes the very détente relationship which makes liberalization possible. Medvedev expected the Soviet rulers to reject the Jackson Amendment. Continued Western pressure will only cause a reversion to a Cold War-type of situation and will reinforce the siege mentality which Sakharov dislikes.

Medvedev believes that Sakharov's open support for the Jackson Amendment was a "tactically wrong" step. Such action will only infuriate the Soviet rulers and cause them to tighten the screws at home. Instead, Medvedev notes that a new Soviet Constitution is being drafted and that the authors "cannot avoid" making the right of free emigration a part of the new document. American economic pressure, Medvedev notes, did not moderate Cuban radicalism. Given this fact, Medvedev argues, the idea that withholding credits and technology will induce Soviet reform is pure fantasy. Overt pressure will only hinder, not advance, the goal of democratization.³³
Andrei Amalrik comes to Sakharov's defense against Medvedev. The West can induce some change within the Soviet Union, Amalrik believes, even if he disagrees with Sakharov over the extent of that change. In any event, Amalrick refuses to accord Roy Medvedev the status of "dissident." "In reality," Amalrik notes, "everything that Medvedev says meets almost completely the official Soviet views."  

Ad hominem arguments are not the only weapons Amalrik uses to impale Medvedev's view. Medvedev calls Sakharov's support of the Jackson Amendment unwise because this action antagonizes the regime and prompts the Soviet leaders to tighten the screws. Taken to its logical conclusion, however, Medvedev's argument militates against any expression of dissent. No doubt the dissidents antagonize the Party. Should the movement thus disband, lest it hurt Brezhnev's feelings and forestall reform? Medvedev's "logic" really calls for silencing all dissidents, and Amalrik refuses to join Medvedev's leap of faith regarding voluntary reform.  

Aside from Western pressure, Sakharov sees hope for world peace in the process of convergence between East and West. Because of common needs for industrialization and modernization, a new managerial class has emerged within the respective societies. As ideological fervor gives way to a preoccupation with technical problems, the Soviet and American societies will grow to resemble each other. In both systems, the new elites will demand more consumer goods, forcing society to demilitarize. With education, the technical class will spurn the Party slogans and demand reform. As the systems converge, radicalism subsides, democratic values spread, consumer demand prevails,
and world peace is promoted. Such, at least, is Sakharov's theory. When he speaks of the "inevitable process of rapprochement between the two systems," Sakharov implies that even without the dissident movement, democratization is inevitable. Since they face similar problems, the capitalist and socialist systems must freely borrow "positive elements" from each other. In this respect, convergence represents a new synthesis between East and West. Sakharov's analytical style thus retains some aspects of Hegelian thought. Détente and convergence represent two roads to the same goal. To Sakharov, convergence is an inexorable process leading to liberalization. But through Western pressure and internal dissent, democratization may progress long before convergence reaches fruition.

Western Leftism

Too often Western intellectuals exhibit what Sakharov calls "Leftist-liberal faddishness." Both Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn are critical of Western leftism, but the latter dissident is much more bitter. This faddishness displays itself when Western liberals apply one set of values to socialist systems and an entirely different set of values to capitalist systems. The human rights issue is one example. Western leftists, Sakharov believes, are much too gullible in accepting at face value the claims of socialist states. Any information conflicting with their preconceptions is dismissed as reactionary.

Illustrative of Western liberals' hypocrisy is the issue of America's intervention in Vietnam, Sakharov argues. Sakharov has long been consistent in his opposition to America's role in Vietnam. Yet
Sakharov notes that many Western liberals who condemned America's involvement as immoral "did not notice" reprehensible acts committed by the Viet Cong against other Vietnamese. Mass executions of civilians in Hue, systematic terror against villagers suspected of collaboration—these atrocities were committed by the "progressive forces" while the left's moralistic critique fell to a hush.

The Chilean Pinochet regime is routinely condemned in the world press, in the United Nations, and by nearly every government. But no condemnation is heard regarding Cambodia, where the Khmer Rouge "liberators" have killed approximately 1.2 million people. Compare this to the groundswell of outrage when President Nixon ordered an invasion of Cambodia in 1970. If Western liberals are truly concerned about human rights, Sakharov asks, what explains the selectivity of their outrage?

Sakharov does not argue that atrocity justifies atrocity. Rather, he is trying to introduce some perspective and a measure of consistency to the human rights issue. The left generally exhibits neither perspective (unless it be their own narrow one) nor consistency, he believes. How simple the left's approach is! Here is the left and here is the right. On one side we have our good dictatorships, on the other side the intolerable tyrannies. On one side we have our "progressive elements," on the other side the "reactionary forces." Leftist tyranny is written off as a growing pain of those regimes combatting "neo-colonialism." Rightist oppression must be fought, however. Sakharov certainly does not pillory all Western liberals on this score, but he nevertheless sees shallowness as a prominent trait.
What causes this "leftist-liberal faddishness"? Sakharov offers four suggestions. First, much of the Western left is made up of young radicals. The ardor for revolution per se seems to override a systematic concern for human rights. To young leftists, the latter seems to be an unexciting task. Second, faddishness is compounded by a reluctance on the part of older people to appear to be old-fashioned. Novelty starts to take precedence over consistency. Modern societies exalt youth and denigrate agedness. What is fashionable is more tempting than what is principled. A third reason for Western gullibility is found in the distorted information received from communist states.

Finally, Sakharov notes that "often it is not the more logical idea that takes precedence but ephemeral notions that are more extravagant and easier to grasp." Yet this view contradicts Sakharov's earlier justification for intellectual freedom, i.e., the argument that such liberty is needed in order to destroy mass myths in the "marketplace of ideas." The race for credibility is not always given to the logical or true, but to the plausible and the inaccurate. Such a view lands a roundhouse blow to Sakharov's confidence that enlightened ideas will prevail. In such a way does Sakharov unwittingly demolish one of the liberal assumptions underlying his proposals.

**Amalrik on East-West Relations**

Amalrik shares Solzhenitsyn's concern over the West's demise but, unlike the novelist, Amalrik does not see the West in almost certain decline. He speaks of the West's "faltering self-confidence,"
and views the current preoccupation with human rights as a moral boost for the West. Dissidents defend those values which have always been the West's moral foundation. Supporting the democratic opposition in the Soviet Union is thus in the West's best interest. Soviet dissent helps to humanize communism elsewhere, inspiring groups such as Eurocommunists to act independently of Moscow.

Americans reflect much of the naivete of the reformist ideologists as well. Amalrik argues that the United States sees Russia as a status quo power, not a revolutionary force. With increased trade, tourism, and Western influences, Russians will become "just like us," Americans believe. American opinions regarding the Soviet Union derive from hopes and not realism, Amalrik argues. He urges Americans to recognize the Soviet Union as an aggressive state which will never be "just like us."

But a new Cold War is not the answer. Rather, the West should seek détente, but a different type of détente. Amalrik's ideal would differ from the current relaxation of tensions. Genuine détente requires Soviet democratization. Just how much democratization Amalrik would require is unclear, but toleration of dissent is surely one condition. Without an affinity of values between the two systems, détente will be meaningless. Western diplomats should watch for the Soviets to respect basic human rights. Otherwise détente will degenerate into a cynical modus vivendi and will not be much different from the Cold War. Amalrik admits that he is skeptical toward the possibility of any cultural affinity. Nevertheless, he argues, rapprochement should still be the goal.
Lacking in Amalrik's discussion is Sakharov's urgent tone. The historian clearly does not share Sakharov's worry over nuclear war. Amalrik also favors more aggressive Western pressure in order to induce Soviet respect for human rights. Here Amalrik differs with Solzhenitsyn and Roy Medvedev, both of whom argue that Western pressure on Russia would be ineffectual, if not counterproductive. Western leverage includes withholding from Russia credits, technology, and food. Amalrik thus ventures beyond Sakharov's linkage, which embraces technology embargoes but which rejects credit and food cut-offs on humanitarian grounds. It is also important to note that while Sakharov believes that Western pressure can speed Russia on her path toward the New Enlightenment, Amalrik has no such ambition. The best that any linkage can do is to make Russia more peaceable toward the West, a bit more tolerant as a society. But Amalrik denies that Western pressure can rebuild Russian society in the image of some grand and new system.

The Dissident Debate

That the dissident movement is heterogeneous can be easily seen from the dialogue between Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov. Respectively, they are leaders among the creative and scientific intelligentsia. In his horror over Solzhenitsyn's vision of Russia's future, Sakharov joined many Western liberals. Though he acknowledged Solzhenitsyn's unequalled status as a writer, Sakharov had many objections to Solzhenitsyn's political views.

Specifically, Sakharov claims that by exaggerating the role of ideology, Solzhenitsyn misanalyzes the Soviet system. Even if
the rulers renounced ideology, Sakharov argues, no genuine reform will be forthcoming without a corresponding diffusion of governmental power. Concentration of authority, not Marxism, is the root evil of the Soviet system. As long as men function in a climate of conformity, it is useless to discard ideology. To Sakharov, the major Russian problem is the "barrack-square" mentality cultivated by authoritarian regimes. Thus does Sakharov readily endorse the model of Western-style parliamentary democracy for Russia. Ideology is not the main problem, for most Soviet citizens privately scoff at it.

Solzhenitsyn retorts that ideology is the root problem. If no one believes in this dogma, yet all submit to it, this shows the frightening power of communist ideology. Russia's political history has been characterized by concentrated political power, and people lived quite well. Soviet cruelties dwarf the calamities of past centuries not because of authoritarianism, but because of the callous ideology. More than any other people, Russians have suffered at the hands of this tyranny. Thus, it is only just that the Russians gain some respite by turning inward and focusing on their own problems.

Sakharov counters that all nationalities, not merely the Russians, have suffered. Solzhenitsyn's lament for the Russians is akin to national chauvinism. Crimean Tatars, Ukrainian nationalists, the Baltic peoples—these groups have suffered too, yet they are excluded from Solzhenitsyn's scheme. In turn, Solzhenitsyn reminds Sakharov that he favors granting self-determination to all nationalities. (Yet this contradicts one of his earlier objections to democracy. Refuting Sakharov's call for liberal freedoms, Solzhenitsyn
talks ominously of war between various nationalities. Later, answering Sakharov's charge of Great Russian nationalism, Solzhenitsyn notes that he favors full self-determination for all nationalities. Obviously, Solzhenitsyn cannot have it both ways. He is no Great Russian nationalist, he insists. Whenever Russians stop hating each other and speak of a spiritual rebirth, they are criticized for being Great Russian chauvinists. Again Solzhenitsyn distinguishes between nationalism and chauvinism, between patriotism and lemming-like obedience.

Sakharov also takes dead aim at his colleague's plan for the Russian Northeast. Developing this inhospitable wilderness, he argues, is impossible without using that which Solzhenitsyn hates—technology and Western capital. Economic autarky, Solzhenitsyn's goal, is incompatible with the aim of Northeast development. However much virtue Solzhenitsyn sees in it, manual labor will never do the job. And how will Solzhenitsyn lure able-bodied people to this austere taiga, at bayonet point? Is this not just another harebrained virgin land scheme? Citing the worst excesses of industrialization, Solzhenitsyn proceeds to unfairly condemn all progress, all development, all technology, all economic growth. The clock cannot be turned back, however. If Solzhenitsyn is serious about developing the Northeast, Sakharov argues, he must abandon his antiquated and misplaced bias against all that is modern.

National introspection is not a desirable policy either, Sakharov claims. No major problem, such as disarmament, pollution, or development, is solvable at the national level. An international
approach is necessary and world government is one solution. Contrasted to Solzhenitsyn's parochialism is Sakharov's internationalism. If the famous author is in the Russophile tradition, the noted physicist is closer to the 19th century Westernizer mold.

Convergence, not isolation, is Sakharov's alternative. Unlike Solzhenitsyn, he is optimistic regarding the West's ability and willingness to use leverage and induce Soviet Liberalization. But Sakharov finds Solzhenitsyn's cavalier acceptance of authoritarianism frightening. He accuses Solzhenitsyn of "patriarchal religious romanticism." What Solzhenitsyn offers is not an escape from ideology, but rather one more utopian myth—the chimera of spiritual and material salvation bases on primitive methods and aims. One more myth is the last thing that this century needs. Solzhenitsyn offers an unpersuasive response to the charge of patriarchy. He simply claims that he advocates no return to the past since "it's clear to any normal person that one can only move forward." These criticisms, Solzhenitsyn asserts, come from hack journalists who are used to writing only about women's fashions. But Solzhenitsyn has a few criticisms of Sakharov's proposals as well.

Since Sakharov's is a global vision, he must compromise or at least work with every group and ideology, Solzhenitsyn argues. Intolerance toward those beliefs deemed to be "Fascist, racist, militaristic and demagogic" is incompatible with global reform. At once Sakharov supports peaceful coexistence. Without breaking stride, he announces his refusal to work with extremist ideologies. Solzhenitsyn asks what will happen if, in Sakharov's brave new world, these ideologies reappear. Will the offenders be "liquidated"? Will the ideas be censored? If they are not censored, is there not the risk
that the ideas will gain more adherents? If they are censored, has Sakharov not trampled upon his own cherished ideal of intellectual freedom?

And as for "leftist-liberal faddishness," Solzhenitsyn argues, Sakharov is a prime example! In his 1968 volume, Sakharov condemns the internal policies of rightist regimes in Indonesia and Greece, yet presents the "excesses" of his own country in a most indulgent light. When he urges UN intervention to protect and support "progressive elements" in other lands, Sakharov only paves the way for more bloodshed, Solzhenitsyn argues.

Russia will only be changed by Russians, Solzhenitsyn emphasizes, and Sakharov will be no more successful than Peter the Great in transplanting Western traditions in Russia. Multiparty systems entail pettiness and squalor, Solzhenitsyn parries, and Sakharov is merely mouthing his own weary brand of democracy. The whole notion of party and the factious temperament it introduces into society is the problem, not the answer. Democracy is inimical to the Russian tradition. Western assistance is nice, Solzhenitsyn concedes, but it is also a fair-weather friend. The West is too pre-occupied with its own problems to make a sustained press for Soviet reform.

Sakharov is thus chasing a mirage, Solzhenitsyn argues. When Western public opinion tires of the dissident campaign and moves on to dabble in another "cause," Sakharov will have wasted much time that could have been spent on internal reform. Solving Russia's problems is a difficult enough task. Solving the world's problems gives Sakharov material for another book, but the idea that Russia
or Sakharov can accomplish this is a flight of fancy.

Stylistically, Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn vastly differ. Solzhenitsyn is the impassioned Cassandra, the raging Lear. Sakharov is the moderate and occasionally pedantic Polonius. In apocalyptic terms, Solzhenitsyn warns of an East-West conflict. Sakharov counters with his optimistic assessment of convergence as the new ordering principle. One man represents the suppressed anger of the masses; the other voices the suppressed reasoning of the intelligentsia. The dispute between them is remarkably free of acrimony.

The same cannot be said for the Amalrik-Medvedev dispute. But Roy Medvedev is not the sole recipient of Amalrik's criticism. For instance, Amalrik views Solzhenitsyn as yet another ideologue. Solzhenitsyn may claim to oppose all ideologies, but what he himself offers is no different. Amalrik considers Solzhenitsyn's neo-Russian-philism to be nothing more than "nationalism with a human face." Solzhenitsyn's literature, Amalrik argues, "contains the rudiments of a 'complete world philosophy' and will scarcely be tolerant of other ideologies." In his eagerness to replace Marxism with a different unifying belief, Solzhenitsyn becomes what he hates—an ideologue.

There is little doubt that when Amalrik refers to naive persons who accept the notion of "reformism," he has Andrei Sakharov in mind. Contrary to the physicist's hopes, the systems of East and West are not converging. Amalrik unfairly misrepresents and belittles the convergence argument by referring to those who believe that "foreign tourists, jazz records, and miniskirts will help to create
The socialist and capitalist systems will not grow to resemble each other. Things are not getting better in the Soviet Union. Grandiose reform schemes are not practical. Of all this dissidents, Amalrik is the most fervent nay-sayer. In questioning the likelihood of progress, coexistence, and intellectual freedom within the Soviet Union, Amalrik rejects much of Sakharov's liberalism.

On many political issues, therefore, these three dissidents are poles apart. Their debate (and it is a debate, not an argument) is emblematic of much of the dissonance within the dissident movement. But this should not overshadow much common ground shared by these thinkers. All three men agree on the need for change within the Soviet Union. Moreover, all three advocate an evolutionary rather than revolutionary path for such change. None of the three endorse Marxism, though their reasons for this differ. Human values form the foundation of their political perspectives. The substantive dispute among these men reveals an entire philosophical spectrum, a spectrum which corrects any mistaken notion of a monolithic dissident movement.
NOTES TO CHAPTER V


4. Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 10.

5. Ibid., p. 114.


8. Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 83.


10. Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 72.

11. Ibid., p. 38.

12. Ibid., p. 87.


NOTES TO CHAPTER V (continued)

20 Ibid., p. 47.
21 Ibid., p. 27.
23 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 36.
24 Ibid., p. 80.
26 Ibid., p. 108.
27 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 79.
29 Sakharov, My Country and the World, p. 79.
30 Ibid., p. 61.
33 Sakharov, My Country and the World, pp. 63-64.
34 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 For a discussion of how it was the Stevenson Amendment, not the Jackson condition, that prompted Soviet rejection of the Trade Reform Act, see Daniel Yergin, "Politics and Soviet-American Trade: The Three Questions," Foreign Affairs 55 (April 1977): 531-32.
NOTES TO CHAPTER V (continued)

40 Ibid., p. 31.
43 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, p. 78.
47 Ibid., p. 74.
48 Sakharov, My Country and the World, p. 86.
49 Ibid., p. 78.
NOTES TO CHAPTER V (continued)

59 Ibid., p. 10.
60 Ibid., p. 13.
61 Solzhenitsyn, Warning to the West, p. 106.
63 Ibid., p. 6.
WORKS CITED IN CHAPTER V

Books


Periodicals


CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE

He who establishes a dictatorship and does not kill Brutus, or he who founds a republic and does not kill the sons of Brutus, will only reign a short time.
Machiavelli Discourses

A man can be destroyed but not defeated.
Hemingway The Old Man and the Sea

That there is much dissonance within the dissident movement should not be surprising. One can hardly expect dissidents to endorse freedom of discussion in principle and then avoid practicing it among themselves. Contrast this with certain West European communist parties which, by a vote of 1,700 to zero, claim to renounce the doctrine of proletarian dictatorship.¹ Democracy is endorsed without a single dissenting vote among 1,700 delegates. These delegates now endorse democracy as unanimously as they swore allegiance to proletarian dictatorship a mere year ago. The tension between internal party guidelines and party platforms, between democratic centralism and democratic values, accounts for much of the skepticism toward Eurocommunism. But this same tension can only revive confidence regarding the dissidents’s fidelity to ideals.

Dissidents practice among themselves what they preach in their samizdat. Since truthfulness to oneself is a prominent dissident theme, one must almost require that there be disagreement within the movement.
itself. Additionally, we are examining intelligent, free-spirited and oftentimes temperamental men. Within any group such as this there are bound to be differences of opinion. By being truthful to their own ideals and by tolerating dissent within the movement, dissidents may weaken their own campaign by a lack of consensus as to aims and methods. Herein lies what may be the supreme irony of the dissident task: to be true to dissident ideals, the movement must be hamstrung by doctrinal debate.

If dissidents formed a more disciplined group, if they enforced more conformity on their colleagues, they might have a better chance of effecting change. In the process of this change, however, original dissident values such as toleration and critical discussion would have been betrayed. In a sense, an emasculated political movement may be the price that dissidents pay for fidelity to their ideals. Anyway, the dissidents lack the formality which effective reform needs. To speak of a dissident "movement" can be misleading, since the term embraces disparate groups such as the Helsinki Monitoring Committee, Amnesty International, Ukrainian nationalists, and the Committee for Human Rights. Various splinter groups comprise the movement and there is no such thing as formal membership.

Yet the three dissidents discussed herein are united on many points. All oppose the Soviet regime and condemn Stalin, even if they cannot agree on whether the vozhd deserves the suffix "ism." All reject Marxism, even if they differ in what they embrace in its place. Individual liberty forms the cornerstone of their appeal. Whether they rely upon Soviet, natural or international law, the dissidents
argue that the individual must not submit to "the collective." All three dissidents deplore nihilism, even if they disagree over what values men are to hold. All three desire a reform of Soviet society, even if they disagree as to its likelihood.

It is important to reiterate that what we have examined is but one small slice of a broad movement. For instance, all three dissidents discussed herein are reformists, not revolutionaries. This is not a point of consensus within the entire movement, however. Certain nationalist and fascist groups sanction violence as a means to resist or change the state.

We have sought neither a "representative dissident" nor a synthesis of dissident thought. The first is a futile search; the second a presumptuous and equally fruitless task. But the fact that we have examined so tiny a slice of the dissident movement only supports our main thesis. For if there is substantial disagreement among these three dissidents, there is probably even more within the movement as a whole. Given such a dialogue within the movement's moderate wing, one can easily imagine the doctrinal discord within more extreme Maoist and neo-Leninist groups.

If any central truth emerges from the dissident dialogue, perhaps it is the message that ideas are indomitable. Pariahs to their countrymen, misfits to many in the West, the dissidents speak to whoever will listen. Men may be lobotomized, exiled, or killed. Ideas are not so easily obliterated, though. Soviet leaders hope against hope that this is not the case. They have thus expunged the word *arkhipelag* from the Russian language. Geographers must now use some euphemism regarding a "group of small, far-flung islands."
Of course, the Soviet leaders have also denounced "bourgeois" terms such as "individualism" and "toleration." Yet these concepts live. More than any of their predecessors, the current Soviet leadership tries to sustain at least the appearance of legality in its actions. The newest Constitution accords many liberties (even if it conditions them all on obedience to the state). In their rhetoric, the leaders appeal to democratic ideals. "The pretense of democracy," writes Robert Strauz-Hupe, "is the compliment which tyranny pays to freedom." It is also the compliment which the regime pays to the dissidents.

During World War II a Soviet counter-intelligence agent, Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, was captured by the Nazis and publicly executed. Now a folk heroine in the Soviet pantheon, the woman died with words that could well be the dissidents's motto and solace: "There are many of us."
NOTES TO CHAPTER VI


WORKS CITED IN CHAPTER VI


VITA

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