

# The New Image of Russia: II

*EDITORS' NOTE: The articles below constitute this journal's second instalment in the series launched in the November-December issue (see "Liberalization—A Balance Sheet," by Robert Conquest, and "Is Coercion Withering Away?," by Jeremy Azrael). Both deal with the Soviet newspaper world as a gauge of liberalization: Mr. Gruliow focuses on the manipulation of facts in the daily press, and Mr. Simon presents a vignette of the life of a foreign correspondent in Moscow. A future article will deal with Soviet attempts to influence and distort Western reportage on the USSR.*

## The Role of the Press

*By Leo Gruliow*

LENIN HAD A FONDNESS for the idiomatic expression, *kto kovo?* — "who (will beat—or destroy) whom?" He used it to denote the irreconcilable contradiction, the conflict in which one side or the other must prevail.

Today, whenever special-interest groups clash within Soviet society or the adherents of one or another policy disclose their differences, outside analysts face the *kto kovo* pitfall—the temptation to interpret the development as a confrontation of opposites, bound to culminate in a showdown from which one or the other group must emerge victorious. Have the several administrative reforms in recent years emphasized economic management as the key task of the party, while the ideologists

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press the importance of their own role? There are those who will view the course of events as a mortal struggle between the managerial elite and the political elite. Is there fresh condemnation of "the cult" or a reaffirmation of Stalin's services to the revolution ("despite his excesses")? The Stalinists and the anti-Stalinists, then, are arrayed in serried ranks; who will beat whom?

This is not to say that the conflicts do not go on, that the various elite-groups do not contend for power or that "Stalinists" and "anti-Stalinists" (for want of better terms) lie down together, even as the lion and the lamb. It is to suggest that the clashes visible to the eye are not always what they seem.

The Soviet regime conceals a great deal from its people, let alone from the outside world. The outside observer must focus on the highlights that can be seen. Many details and complexities are necessarily missing from his picture. Thus simplified, the contending groups and trends in Soviet life appear more sharply defined than they may really be, the issues seem more clear-cut

(and, curiously, sometimes couched in terms more relevant to Western than to Soviet life), and the ultimate outcome is envisioned as a victory of one side over the other. Either Stalinism or anti-Stalinism. Either the managerial elite or the political elite. Either democratization or utter totalitarianism.

These remarks are inspired by much of the Western discussion on the mooted liberalism of the Khrushchev regime. The "either-or" interpretation creeps into it often unintentionally, to be sure. Both those who take the liberalization seriously and those who discount it are careful to voice qualifications and reservations in every respect. Yet inevitably, by the very alternatives in which the question is framed, they leave an impression of assuming that the present Soviet leadership either has adopted a liberal line ("democratization") or basically is hardly different from the preceding regimes.

Some point to the liberal tide that seems to flow in recurring, rising waves. They note that the regime has denounced many oppressive features of Stalinism, has eased the peasant's lot, is searching for rational economic methods, relies more on suasion and incentives and less on coercion, is increasing the trickle of consumer goods and is allowing intellectuals to speak out here and there. The Stalin era or the recent past provides the standard of comparison.

Others take Western democracy as their gauge and show that civil liberties have not been assured, the party dictatorship remains, collective farming leaves the peasant essentially a sharecropper, the trade unions continue to be tools of the regime, and the artists still suffer severe constraints. *Ergo*, little or nothing has changed fundamentally.

IT MIGHT BE argued that both sides are right and that the question is one of degree. True enough. But this leads back to the question of the direction taken by the regime. To ask: "More freedom, or essentially just as little?" is to invite the question, "which way is the regime headed?" And here is our old friend, *kto kovo?* Is it to be democratization or autocracy? It seems to this writer that the whole dispute misses the point. For there has been fundamental change, but not in the regime's goals or principles. What has changed is the setting in which the Soviet regime must operate.

This change came about long before Khrushchev took power. It consisted of factors bulking so large that to enumerate them is merely to remark the obvious: the ruinous destructiveness of nuclear weapons, the emergence of new national states, the progress of the underdeveloped countries in overcoming poverty and back-

wardness, the maturing of the Soviet economy, and the rise of a new generation which (in the Soviet Union no less than elsewhere) expects the good things of life and seeks beliefs of its own, remote from the issues and battles of yesteryear.

Elementary realities, these, already making themselves felt in Stalin's last years; yet the aging dictator stubbornly refused to admit these facts of postwar life, for merely to recognize them was to risk showing up the irrelevance of the established doxy to modern times. And even Malenkov failed to react to them vigorously.

Not so Khrushchev. Shrewdly, he seized upon the recognition of these simple realities to entrench himself in power, thus showing himself, as the Western press never tires of saying, "a realist." (The same term had been applied to Stalin, too, but in a somewhat different sense. Stalin recognized power when he saw it. Khrushchev recognizes some of the real issues and problems. Let it be noted, however, that it is only by contrast with his predecessors' willful blindness that he shines as a realist. The obvious facts of life that Khrushchev belatedly faced up to had been commonplaces to the statesmen, press and public of the West for a decade and more before Khrushchev awoke to them.)

This is the basis for what, for want of a better word, we call the "democratization" of Soviet society. Khrushchev has looked at issues and problems which his predecessors dodged; he has thrown some of them open to discussion and has experimented with ways of meeting them; he has yielded to the pressures which some of these issues present. But at no time has he abandoned his goals and principles. What he has done is to attempt to reconcile them with the actualities which he has perceived.

Yet it is one thing to acknowledge realities, and another to solve the problems they present—particularly when the solutions must fit preconceived goals. When Khrushchev condemns Stalin or Molotov for refusing to face simple facts, he is on solid ground. When he sets forth the problems which they (and Malenkov also) evaded, and shows his own awareness of them, he remains persuasive. But when he himself begins to outline solutions for these problems, he is forced to indulge in wild zigzags, tortured rearrangements, and improvisations—whether the issue be Berlin or domestic economic reorganization—until the vision blurs.

What we are witnessing, then, is not so much a struggle between liberal and autocratic tendencies (although this is going on, too), nor a consistent policy caused by a change of heart on the part of the regime, but rather a floundering and fumbling as the

Soviet leadership strives to reconcile the old goals and principles with today's facts which it has, belatedly, recognized.

THE SOVIET PRESS behavior mirrors this situation. When we compare Khrushchev's press with Stalin's or even with the press of Malenkov's day, the nature of the change becomes apparent.

From Lenin's time to ours, the Soviet leaders have regarded the press purely as a tool for manipulating the public mind and never as an objective reporter of information. Lenin called it a "collective propagandist, collective agitator, collective organizer." Stalin termed it "our longest-range weapon." In Khrushchev's words, it is the party's "sharp and militant weapon." So interchangeable are the definitions that one famous writer on Soviet affairs recently ascribed Khrushchev's words about the press to Lenin and it made no difference. None of the heads of the Soviet regime has shown any scruples about using the press to obscure, conceal or distort facts for his own purposes.

Khrushchev is no different in this respect from his predecessors. Under his rule the press has not become free, nor is it likely to. The rule is still that any fact which cannot fit into the official doctrine is suppressed. But Khrushchev's doctrine now takes cognizance of a whole set of facts that were not provided for in Stalin's, and as a consequence the press is more realistic in its picture of the world.

Because there were so many facts that could not be fitted into the arbitrary schemata which Stalin elaborated behind the tightly shut door of his office, his press resorted to suppression of information on a staggering scale. To take a single instance from hundreds: the Soviet press continued to describe India as a colony years after she had won independence. This Soviet press treatment of India caused first disbelief and then indignation when it came to the attention of the government and the Indian Parliament early in the 1950's.

Even more striking was the concealment, throughout the Stalin years, of the dangers of nuclear warfare. The simplest data on the destructive power of atomic and hydrogen bombs and the facts of the danger of fallout were carefully hidden from the Soviet public. All this was dismissed as part of "the American paper horror mill." The picture of the mushroom cloud was unknown to the Soviet people. So ostrich-like was Moscow's press policy on these topics that even the Soviet Union's own first atomic explosion in 1949 and again its explosion of a second bomb in 1951 were

reported to the public by the Soviet press in the form of announcements from the White House.

Malenkov wavered in his treatment of the subject. When President Eisenhower proposed the "atoms-for-peace" stockpile plan in December 1953, the President said of the increase in the power of nuclear weapons that "every citizen of the world should have some comprehension, at least in comparative terms, of the extent of this development." The Soviet press changed this in translation to "the nature of this development"<sup>1</sup> The censor also deleted the President's mention of the existence of hydrogen bombs "in the range of millions of tons of TNT equivalent." After the American ambassador spoke with Molotov about this censorship the Soviet press printed, twelve days later, a slightly fuller version of the President's remarks—still omitting these passages but now quoting his references to the danger that civilization might be destroyed.<sup>2</sup>

Malenkov made the first Soviet acknowledgment of such a danger in his election speech of March 1954. Hardly a month later, addressing the Supreme Soviet, he revived the old line that it was not civilization that would fall, but capitalism.<sup>3</sup>

Not until the start of 1955 was the Soviet public apprised of the fact that there were thermonuclear bombs thousands of times more powerful than the bomb that exploded over Hiroshima. But Molotov was simultaneously reminding the Soviet people that not world civilization, only capitalism, would be imperiled by nuclear warfare.<sup>4</sup>

IT IS A FAR CRY from this never-never world of Stalin's later days and the hesitant Malenkov interregnum to the present era, when the destructiveness of nuclear weapons is a constant theme. Today the independence of each new African country is recognized in the Soviet press with maps, descriptions of the new country, and a fanfare of publicity. Soviet youth, which in Stalin's time was seen but not heard in the press, now is wont to raise troublesome questions in public print. The problems and difficulties of managing a complicated economy are discussed endlessly instead of being swept under the rug. Khrushchev himself goes trotting about the world, reporting back such discoveries

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, December 10, 1953.

<sup>2</sup> *Izvestia*, December 22, 1953, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Pravda*, April 27, 1954 pp. 5-6; *Izvestia* of same date, pp. 7-8. (Translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. VI, No. 24, p. 10.)

<sup>4</sup> Report to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, published in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, February 9, 1955, pp. 2-4.

as the fact that there are things to be learned from Western industry and agriculture. In almost every field there is a confrontation of actualities—something which was inconceivable in the recent past.

“Self-criticism,” always a device of Soviet newspapers for prodding the public and the intermediate-level functionaries, is carried to greater and greater lengths, at times even to the point of denting the regime’s self-image. The picture of the USSR as a world leader in science and industry is weakened by Khrushchev’s own admission that the land of space flights has a backward chemical industry. The vision of an increasingly consumer-oriented country is impaired by revelations of meat shortages in the shops and of high labor turnover in major industrial areas due to poor living conditions. The claim of a vigorous, large-scale socialist agriculture is allowed to be shadowed over by denunciations of the feeding of large numbers of privately-owned cattle on store-bought bread. The concept of a planned and unified bloc economy is vitiated by the admission that the socialist bloc has still to come up to the challenge of the Common Market in the sphere of economic integration. The preachment of socialist morality as a higher ethic is contradicted by stories of extraordinary embezzlement, nepotism and parasitic living.

All this and more is permitted—indeed, encouraged—inasmuch as it is criticism directed at improving the implementation of the regime’s goals and policies. There is, of course, a tremendous amount of day-to-day petty suppression of information and inhibition of expression, so much that the mind boggles at the mere thought of trying to list the instances that occur in a single month. But it is nothing like the sweeping irrationalities of Stalin’s press, which could deny for years a whole subcontinent’s independence or the power of nuclear weapons.

WHERE, THEN, are the limits? First of all, the flow of information remains strictly controlled. The orders and instructions to the press come, as before, from Agitprop. The leash has been let out, and the press can roam farther afield; but the leash is always there, and from time to time it is shortened.

As long as the facts can be used in accord with the regime’s purposes and as long as they can be explained in a manner consonant with its ideology, even awkward information can be presented in the Soviet press today. It is when the facts shatter the regime’s public image and do not lend themselves to any explanation within the ideological framework that the big curtain descends.

We have had three recent conspicuous examples: the erection of the Berlin wall in the autumn of 1961, the story of the Soviet bases in Cuba in the autumn of 1962, and the Chinese attack upon India in the same period. Each one was a test case, and each is instructive in its own way.

The central element in the story of the Berlin wall was the purpose of the wall—namely, to prevent the further flight of East Germans. This so flatly contradicted the whole Communist thesis that it could not be tolerated. As far as Soviet newspapers were concerned, no one fled from East Germany except a handful of thieves and spies; the border was closed solely to prevent the entry of spies from West Germany; Soviet troops were not in the vicinity, tanks and guns were not deployed, the East German police did not use tear gas or water hoses; statements from the West, such as US Secretary of State Rusk’s offer to submit the Berlin question to the United Nations, were suppressed; criticism by neutrals, such as Indian Prime Minister Nehru, was not reported; in fact, for a long time Soviet citizens were not even told that there *was* a wall. It was only a month after the wall had been erected that a single Soviet daily *Izvestia*, made brief mention of a barrier of barbed wire, bricks and cement. Until that time it had been treated merely as a peaceable closing of the border by an indignant and aroused East German populace.

In the case of the Berlin wall, the Soviet side held the initiative, and Agitprop was able to keep a sure hand on the flow of information to the Soviet people. Soviet correspondents on the scene built up a barrage of first-person stories describing the joy on the faces of Berlin’s residents.

The fighting on the Chinese-Indian frontier was a more difficult story for Agitprop to handle. Here, too, the facts contradicted a basic ideological claim—namely, that the Communist countries were united in the pursuit of peace. For five days after both sides had announced the outbreak of hostilities, the Soviet press suppressed the news. On the sixth day two papers alone, out of the whole Soviet press, carried the text of a Chinese statement declaring that armed clashes had occurred and proposing a truce on Chinese terms.<sup>5</sup> Editorials in the two papers backed the proposal.<sup>6</sup>

There was no indication of which side had opened hostilities; “imperialist circles in the West” were blamed for instigating them. There was no mention of how the fighting was going. The Soviet editorials attacked Indian

<sup>5</sup> *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, October 25, 1962.

<sup>6</sup> *Pravda* editorial on same date; *Izvestia* editorial in national edition of October 26.

"reactionary circles" and remarked that in the situation prevailing in India "even progressive-minded persons may succumb to nationalistic influences and take a chauvinistic stand." Of all the Soviet papers, only *Pravda* (November 1, 1962) reported Krishna Menon's dismissal as Defense Minister—in a two-sentence item in small type, without any heading or explanation. Two weeks of warfare went unreported; then *Pravda* (November 5) carried another editorial urging a truce, but not describing the state of affairs; and that was the extent of the information offered to the Soviet public until the cease-fire, one month after the fighting had broken out. All Soviet dailies seem to have announced the cease-fire in the war that only two of them had ever mentioned previously and that none of them had reported.

**THE EMBARRASSED TREATMENT** of the Chinese aggression and the suppression of the news about it were as nothing compared to the gyrations of the Soviet press in dealing with the Cuban story.

President Kennedy's initial disclosure of the presence of long-range Soviet missiles in Cuba was never published in the USSR. The Soviet government statement breaking the news of the quarantine to the Soviet people spoke only of "weapons defined by the United States as offensive weapons."<sup>7</sup> It did not identify them as long-range missiles or as Soviet weapons. The press broke into denunciations of US "piracy" and "aggression" and accused the United States of "strangling" Cuban women and children by cutting off supplies. Protest meetings went on all over the Soviet Union for three days. US aerial photos of weapons installations in Cuba were derided as fakes.

The first indication to the Soviet public of the nature of the weapons in question did not come until the height of this period of protests and demonstrations, and it was accompanied by denials of the American charges. Even then the exact nature of the weapons was concealed. After three days of meetings protesting against the "farce" of the American charges, it must have come as a shock to the Soviet people to read in Premier Khrushchev's October 28 message to Kennedy:

I regard with great understanding your concern and the concern of the people of the United States of America in connection with the fact that the weapons which you describe as offensive are indeed formidable (*grozny*). Both you and we understand what kind of weapons these are.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, October 24, 1962, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, October 28, 1962, p. 1.

Khrushchev and Kennedy may have understood, along with the people of most of the world outside the Soviet bloc; but those within the Soviet Union had to guess.

So swiftly did Agitprop change the tune on Cuba that *Izvestia* was caught napping. On page two of its national edition of October 28, one of its commentators lashed out at the "cynical traders' and money-changers' yardstick" of those Americans who talked of trading American bases near Soviet territory for the removal of Soviet long-range weapons from Cuba; on page one of the same paper was the text of Khrushchev's note offering just such a trade.

Within a week "nonoffensive" weapons changed, in the Soviet press, into menacing ones; they ceased to be Cuban and became Soviet; and their removal became a victory for peace (the question of what their installation had been was left unanswered). The Soviet public was not told that Soviet vessels carrying peaceful cargoes had been passed by the US quarantine forces, nor that other vessels had turned back at sea; it was not told that work on the missile installations had first proceeded after the announcement of the quarantine and then stopped; it was not told of the negotiations over inspection of the weapons' removal or of differences between the Soviet stand on this matter and the position that Cuba took.

#### What Page of *Izvestia* Do You Read?

*Some persons in the USA, measuring everything by their cynical traders' and money changers' yardstick, are indulging in speculation as to whether they might, so to say, "give away" some American bases near Soviet territory in exchange for depriving Cuba of the means of repelling American aggression. This is how [Max] Frankel, a Washington correspondent of the New York Times, talked in that paper October 25th. Such, if you please, "proposals" give away only their authors' unclean consciences.*

—*Izvestia*, October 28, p. 2.

*I [Khrushchev in message to President Kennedy] . . . make this proposal: We agree to remove those weapons from Cuba which you regard as offensive weapons. We agree to do this and to state this commitment in the United Nations. Your representative will make a statement to the effect that the United States, on its part, bearing in mind the anxiety and concern of the Soviet state, will evacuate its analogous weapons from Turkey.*

—Same paper, same date, p. 1.

THESE ARE THREE case histories of the Soviet suppression of major news. The instances could be multiplied; there are a host of lesser cases. Suppression of information, however, is only part of the picture. In any consideration of the Soviet press it is equally significant to note the regimented unanimity with which it swings into action at the slightest signal from above. Anyone who reads the Soviet press is familiar with the campaigns that sweep through its pages, fever-like. The germ of a single remark dropped by Khrushchev is enough to set a campaign in motion, and no Soviet paper is immune; all break out simultaneously in a rash of headlines and articles on the dictated topic, keeping it up until the fever is spent; and a fresh fever breaks out at the next signal.

This subservient unanimity of the press is invoked at times in response to a passing whim or humor of the leader. In a speech a few years ago, Khrushchev related the case of a reformed criminal who had appealed to him personally for help in "going straight." Expressing the opinion that a more lenient attitude might be taken toward petty criminals with the proper spirit of remorse, the Soviet leader suggested that such offenders might be paroled under surveillance at their places of work or residence, rather than be incarcerated.<sup>9</sup> Without dissent, the press set up a hue and cry for such a parole system. After a time the campaign died out. A few years later it was reversed—with equal unanimity—and a steady denunciation of leniency and parole issued from the press. But never once did the papers mention that the trend toward clemency had been initiated by Khrushchev himself.

A similar about-face has been executed in the treatment of religion: just as there was a unanimous response several years ago to a signal that insulting attacks on the clergy and on believers be terminated, so there has been a unanimous press effort in more recent campaigns to blacken religion, frequently by depicting men of the cloth as corrupt, drunken or perverted, and their parishioners as inhuman fanatics. The same exaggerated press response to the leader's mood was recently demonstrated after Khrushchev visited an art show and erupted with criticism of "decadent" abstract painting. The press swung into line with a campaign of vituperation against nonrealistic art and even managed to find a Soviet citizen who had become a spy through his admiration for abstractionism.

Soviet treatment of crime news runs in "waves," depending upon what campaign has currently been

<sup>9</sup> Speech to Soviet Congress of Writers, May 22, 1959, published in *Pravda and Izvestia*, May 24, 1959, pp. 1-3. (Translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XI, No. 21, pp. 3-9, 29.)

decreed. When the campaign fever is running against speculation, almost all the crime reports are on speculation. The same is true when the favored target is "hooliganism" or embezzlement. In short, what is printed is less news than it is "advertising" for drives ordered from above. Then there are periods when crime news disappears. This, too, is a campaign, of a kind.

Forty and more years ago some American newspapers used to indulge in the invention of "crime waves." It became a joke among their readers that when other news was dull, a newspaper might proclaim that a "crime wave" had hit the area, particularly if the newspaper was opposed to the local mayor or police commissioner. Yet almost always there was another newspaper ready to deflate and ridicule the story. The Western press is not spotless in its record of suppression or exaggeration of facts. But the possibility of diversity in a relatively free market of opinion is a prime difference distinguishing the Western press from the Soviet press, even at the latter's best. Once in a while Soviet journals show a few timid signs of independence—for example, *Novyi mir*, now edited by the "liberal" poet Tvardovsky, prints works by Ehrenburg, Dudintsev, Bondarev, Solzhenitsyn and other writers who incur the displeasure of the more conservative journals,<sup>10</sup> and the press at large is generally willing to debate policies on which the regime is as yet undecided or which are of minor significance. But once an issue of any import is settled on high and the orders go out, the press lines up. If an editor dares to defy the decreed line, he stands a good chance of being dismissed.

WHAT ARE WE to make of this Soviet press? The question is crucial to the whole discussion of the "democratization" of Soviet society, for there can hardly be a trend toward more democratic practices without an informed public.

<sup>10</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that *Novyi mir*, in publishing Alexander Solzhenitsyn's story "A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich"—the first Soviet account of life in a Siberian concentration camp under Stalin—acted with specific authorization from the party Central Committee. This was disclosed by party Secretary L. F. Ilyichev in his speech at a meeting of party and government leaders with Soviet men of letters and artists on December 18, 1962. Ilyichev, while boasting of this and other examples of top-level approval of "anti-Stalinist" writings, warned against the demand for "books without editors." In Soviet publishing, the censor holds the title of "editor," which explains the meaning of Ilyichev's cryptic phrase. In contrast to Solzhenitsyn, Ehrenburg, Dudintsev, and Bondarev have all been attacked—albeit unsuccessfully so far—for their writings in *Novyi mir*.

Certainly Khrushchev's press is a great improvement over Stalin's. Just as certainly, it is not a free press. All of the controls and all of the dictation from above remain. The difference is in how the controls are applied—in the length of the leash.

Edward Crankshaw looks to the time when "more and more Soviet journalists, in one context or another, will, however intermittently, be required or allowed to utter truth." In his view, "there are enough people in the Soviet Union who know the difference between truth and lies, and have seen that the truth can on occasion be spoken—there are tens of millions of them—to form the foundation of a public opinion which will demand not only specific action from the government but also more information on which it can base its views on the need for further action."<sup>11</sup> No one would dispute that plenty of Russians recognize propaganda for what it is,

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<sup>11</sup> *The New York Times Magazine* (Sunday), Dec. 2, 1962.

and dislike it. But it is hard to see how such dissatisfaction can ever develop into a concerted and effective force so long as those who hold the controls regard the press and public opinion itself in the frame of reference shared by Lenin, Stalin and Khrushchev.

The degree of openness and freedom in the press depends, then, not upon *kto kovo?*—whether public opinion or those who long for such openness will prevail over the autocratic manipulation of facts and views—but, in the long run, upon the extent to which the Soviet regime can reconcile its creed with the facts of life. When the discrepancies are not too disturbing, it finds a measure of journalistic frankness expedient. When the contrast is too painful—as in the Cuban missiles case, the Chinese-Indian conflict, or the story of the Berlin wall—it suppresses the facts. For its main function remains now—as it has since its inception—to propagandize rather than to inform, to indoctrinate rather than to enlighten.

## A Correspondent in Moscow

*By Sacha Simon*

THE WESTERN COLONY in Moscow, consisting of diplomats, newspapermen and their families, totals about 2,000 persons. They can be roughly divided in three categories: those who look upon their stay in Moscow as exile, detesting every aspect of their daily life; those who live in an ivory tower and refuse to see or hear anything outside their professional obligations; and those, finally, who, moved by a desire to discover the strange and enigmatic world that surrounds them, pass their time fulminating against the over-bureaucratized Soviet institutions and extolling the warm nature and great virtues of the Russian people—the

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most sensitive, expressive, and hospitable of all peoples. . . .

Indeed, the warmth of the people and the harshness of the regime are the two factors that continuously confront everyone, and particularly the journalists who have the thankless task of reporting on a country still withdrawn in its own shell, still suffering from complexes that cast any foreigner in the role of a potential enemy or spy.

While knowledge of the Russian language is essential to an understanding of the Soviet scene, it is not sufficient of itself. Intellectually and emotionally, the Russian people—and their rulers—are so different from their Western counterparts that all comparisons are always partly false. A deeper knowledge of the country is necessary in order to appreciate Soviet life in all its nuances. That is why I considered myself very fortunate during