

~~SECRET~~

IV. RUMOR IMPLANTATION ON SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

A. The communes are the essence of communism and for reasons of block solidarity, Soviet leaders may be forced to institute them in the USSR: this was viewed as highly improbably by student respondents who argue that conditions of mentality between the two peoples and historical developments are totally different.

B. The Chinese communist war clique might drag the Soviet Union into a disastrous war decimating the Russian population but leaving the Chinese only partially annihilated: most of the respondents chewed this one over thoughtfully, gulped a few times to themselves and then tried to dismiss the possibility as remote because the socialist camp is only for peace. This was also evidently a painful question to Russian listeners.

~~SECRET~~

E. West did not seize the Pasternak matter as a cold war weapon but it was only Soviet treatment of Pasternak that caused the shocked reaction in the West: of this no Soviet student made any point. The vast majority of the students had no idea of how the work was interpreted nor Pasternak judged in the West.

II. RUMOR IMPLANTATION ON PASTERNAK AND DR. ZHIVAGO

A. Is it true some great Soviet writers refused to sign the ban on Pasternak? No student could imagine that there might be such a difference within an organization such as the Writers' Union. They explained this away by saying that the will of the majority rules in any "democracy". They also wanted names of such writers, essentially so that they could judge the worth of the voice of these adherents to Pasternak. They doubted that these people could be very "great" if they sided with a writer who produced untrue pictures of contemporary Soviet life.

B. Is it true that Khrushchev will permit an abridged version of Dr. Zhivago which Soviet citizens may read? This possibility was regarded as unlikely in view of the government's stand to date in the matter. They did feel that such an edition would be read out of curiosity to see what the essence of the criticism was. Categorically it was thought that Mr. Khrushchev himself could have little personally with the ordering of such an act. A vote of the entire government would be necessary, as the Soviet system is not based on arbitrary one-man rule.

C. Is it true that there have been student demonstrations in MGU against Surkov's condemnation of Pasternak and Dr. Zhivago? No, this is not true. There were some Komsomol-led discussions of excerpts of the novel which tended to show why it was bad and had been condemned. The students felt that no single man such as Surkov could possibly issue such a ban alone, but that he must have had the entire Writers' Union squarely behind him.

D. Is it true that the Komsomol organization in Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev universities had been instructed not to permit student discussions about Pasternak and Dr. Zhivago? Students were unable to give any information about happenings at other universities than their own, but to the best of their knowledge no such instructions had been issued. On the contrary, Komsomol in MGU had given its own interpretation and had invited student participation.

III. ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONS ON SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

A. Student reaction to increased Soviet military and economic aid to Red China: student opinion represented the point of view that such aid had not in fact increased. Source was unable to refute this statement because of lack of facts on his own part. This is a serious handicap to

~~SECRET~~

Excerpts from Report by **I. ANALYSIS OF PASTERNAK AND DR. ZHIVAGO AMONG STUDENTS**

A. Student reaction to government ban on Pasternak and Dr. Zhivago: Students were generally in accord with the ban because they considered Pasternak too subjective a writer who had unfairly criticized Soviet reality. His work does not serve the interests of the people and his hero does not represent the thoughts and feeling of the author--as should be the case in true Soviet literature. The picture of Soviet life portrayed does not correspond to actual conditions. Thus the ban is considered necessary. No student was aware that the State Publishing House had accepted publications before the ban was pronounced by the Writers' Union.

B. Frequency of those who had read Dr. Zhivago or other Pasternak works: None had read the former and only one or two had read any of his poems. His translations were known and thought to be of high quality, but this work was not thought to be of a creative nature. One or two contacts admitted having read through the excerpts of Dr. Zhivago furnished by the Komsomol and were in agreement with the ban based only on examination of these selected sections. Source was unable to check any reasonable percentage of book shops to learn which of Pasternak's work are available on the Soviet market in the capital. None of the respondents were knowledgeable of the fact that the Polish Writers' Union had telegraphed congratulations to Pasternak for receipt of the Nobel Prize. Pasternak is now regarded by students as an insignificant Soviet writer who is incapable of turning out a literary work capable of winning a prize as highly regarded as the Nobel Prize. They feel that he has deviated and must be so treated.

C. The Pasternak affair and "liberalization" after the 20th Party Congress: only very begrudging do Soviet students admit the possibility that Pasternak's Dr. Zhivago may one day be found to contain grains of truth and thus deserve to be read by Soviet citizens and that thus Pasternak--in a changed political climate--may be "rehabilitated". They acknowledge that this kind of change has happened before in modern Soviet times; but they do not regard the Pasternak ban as a step backward away from Liberalization. They frankly state that the USSR is a dictatorship and that there is no place for those to enjoy "freedom in the Soviet sense of the word" who abused it by writing untruths.

D. Emphasis of the literary aspects of the work, not the political content: as none of the participants had read the book, they were at a loss to judge its literary value. They did feel strongly that the West chose the novel for the political criticism they believe it points against the Soviet Union, not alone for the literary character it may contain.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS
AR 70-14

~~SECRET~~

any Westerner in arguments with Soviet students. They often have facts and appreciate their value in coming to grips with the solution of problems, so any future agents sent to the USSR ought to have thorough grounding in factual material. Assuming that Soviet aid to Red China had increased, Soviet students did not view this with alarm, as China was held to be in need of help from more advanced socialist countries.

B. Reactions to Mao's and Peiping's reported claims of "ideological equality" with Moscow: Source noted that this point was conceded with some reluctance by Soviet students. They choose rather to think that conditions in China are so different that they call for and justify a different path toward workable communism in China. All Soviet students consider the Chinese communists to be diligent, frugal and very pleasant people who have a large country, a large population and large potential and large problems.

C. Reactions of intellectuals and peasants to the Chinese Communes, Do they represent a advanced step toward communism, Are the Chinese communists taking a different road to communism, Is the Sovkhoz and Agrogorod idea a step toward the Commune idea in the USSR, Does Moscow recognize different roads to communism?: Practically no student with whom source spoke had any clear understanding of the commune system as practiced in China. Source was unable to visit any places in the country to talk to peasants and obtain their opinions or determine their state of knowledge. The Soviet students do not feel that the communes necessarily represent an advanced step toward communism. In their eyes the commune in China is an institution adapted to special Chinese conditions and is still very young to be judged finally. It was felt that the Chinese communists are taking a different road to communism, but the details of the difference escape practically every Soviet student. There reigns a general lack of factual material information for establishing such a comparison. It is not felt that the Sovkhoz and Agrogorod idea in the USSR are steps toward the commune system in Russia. Russian conditions and historical traditions under communism are defended as being different and necessary in their own right. Again, source recommends vigorously that future agents be armed with historical and up-to-date facts on such movements and developments as the commune idea. Many of source's contacts had worked during the summers in the Virgin Lands and thought this experience valuable for them personally. As to whether Moscow recognizes different roads to communism, this appeared to be a moot point for most Soviet students vis-a-vis China. They see themselves confronted by a fait accompli on the part of a powerful neighbor and cannot very well argue about ways and means in these circumstances. But when the same question is posed with reference to Poland or particularly to Yugoslavia, the answers are radically different and the Russians present a solid front that these smaller nations must learn from the Soviet Union and dare not deviate. Yugoslavia was regarded by a certain number of vociferous students as being not a socialist state but one fostering state capitalism with the money supplied largely by imperialist nations of the West. This question is obviously a very sensitive one for Soviet students.

~~SECRET~~