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Summary: This paper represents an attempt to summarize the general contents of the Penkovsky Papers and has been written on the assumption that, while the form of their appearance may be criticized, their substance is authentic and largely credible. The Papers present a great deal of material, little of it new, on the Soviet intelligence network, testifying to its vastness and its heavy reliance on illegal methods. Penkovsky's observations on military politics in the Soviet Union are a valuable confirmation of Western studies in recent years, showing the presence of fierce debate about resource allocations, weapons, and strategic doctrine. Penkovsky is weakest in describing and interpreting the character and the political-military objectives of the top Soviet leadership because his judgment is clouded by intense personal prejudices and a certain isolation from the level of real political decision-making. As a result he conjures up an image of the Soviet threat to the West which can not be confirmed entirely by objective study of Soviet policy and capabilities. But despite subjective and often contradictory views, Penkovsky reflects the widespread misgivings which Soviet military authorities entertained about Khrushchev's international adventures.

In fact and fiction, the 1960's have turned out to be the decade of the spy. Without a doubt, the story which dominates the decade and is most unlikely to be displaced in the near future is that of Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky, the Soviet colonel who devoted a substantial portion of his life to serving his government as an intelligence officer and then, for reasons largely ideological, switched his allegiance and efforts to the service of the West. To this enigmatic figure, slightly bald and only moderately good-looking, the dashing James Bond can not hold a candle, except -- to take a term from Bond himself -- in the realm of "womanizing", and even here Penkovsky appears to have had an achievement or two to his credit. Konon Molody alias Gordon Lonsdale? No comparison, really! Lonsdale was a professional in command of certain skills and gifts, to be sure. But he was a humdrum agent who did his job in work-a-day fashion until his time ran out, a credit to his employers, a substantial but not a brilliant career.

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Contrary to his intentions and those of the Soviet intelligence authorities who underwrote the project, Lonsdale's recent autobiography, SPY, a quite unimaginative propaganda-laden pot-boiler, detracts from rather than adds to his stature.

One can hardly say that Oleg Penkovsky was a manifestation of the skill and enterprise of British and American intelligence which availed themselves of his services for sixteen months in 1961 and 1962. He was a stroke of dazzling good fortune. He was not recruited, he recruited himself. He was even rejected at first by over-cautious American contacts who must have thought he was too good to be true. Nor does it appear that Penkovsky was himself an extraordinarily brilliant intelligence operative. He was a solid professional, long trained in the trade by meticulous Soviet instructors, and had varied experience, but was betrayed in the end by his overenthusiasm in serving the West.

Penovsky was unique by virtue of his position. He was close, very close, to the center of Soviet power, an inhabitant of a world shrouded from view by a virtually impenetrable fog of secrecy and public deception through which legions of Sovietologists strain to perceive the slightest clue or hint of the inner reality. For a brief interval, Penkovsky opened a window into this world. The picture he provided is not a crystal clear and satisfying one because the limitations of his position and his own perceptions had their distorting influence. Nor is the picture a very comforting one, even when allowance is made for Penkovsky's profound personal hatred of the secret world he betrayed. But it is a fascinating picture which commands the attention of responsible minds in both East and West.

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A Comment on Authenticity

The manner in which Penkovsky's legacy has been presented to the world has attracted a great deal of critical attention. His publishers' story is that, preceding and during his brief career as a Western double agent, he compiled a lengthy memoir about himself, his work, and his environment which was smuggled to the West via the same channels used to bring the works of Tarsis, Tertz, and Pasternak to light. His motive was self-justification, to convince the world that his love of peace and the interests of the Russian people and his hate of the Soviet system lay at the root of his actions. These materials were translated by Peter Deriabin, a Soviet intelligence officer who defected to the West, edited "slightly" by Frank Gibney, and published as the Penkovsky Papers. A touching note: the proceeds of this enterprise are to go to a special Oleg Penkovsky fund "to further the cause of genuine peace and friendship between the American and Russian peoples." Who knows? Perhaps some day the first "Oleg Penkovsky Scholar" will depart for Moscow to gather material for a dissertation on "Decision-making in the KGB." And a Soviet intelligence official will deliver to American dowagers the first "Oleg Penkovsky Exchange Lecture" on "The Spy's Eye View of Central Park."

The official Soviet reaction to the Penkovsky Papers would seem to render these pleasant prospects rather improbable, at least for the moment. Moscow has labeled them an outright forgery and blatant calumny designed by the CIA to intensify the cold war. The most noteworthy criticism of the Papers come, however, from informed Western readers who question the form in which they are presented. There is reason to doubt the claim that a harried spy leading three lives would have been able or willing to compile a memoir which runs to nearly four hundred printed pages and then leak them to the West through a channel other than those employed to transmit his substantive intelligence. Certain textual and factual oddities in the Papers

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suggest that a hand other than Penkovsky's wrote some of the words ascribed to him.

The argument about the Papers' authenticity will surely rage for some time. For the moment, the following would seem to be a balanced judgment: The Papers represent a composite of materials, some written by him, some transcribed from the record of his interrogations, some "compiled" from the substance of the information which he transmitted, and all shaped to assume the appearance of a memoir. In the world of espionage, this device hardly constitutes a very striking example of duplicity.

But what of the substance of the Papers? No doubt those who evaluated the material which Penkovsky transmitted to the West had themselves to appraise the accuracy of his personal testimony. Naturally, most of the technical and military documents which he photographed more or less spoke for themselves; but they have not found their way into the Papers. Much of what Penkovsky had to say must be accepted as accurate because it confirms or amplifies information already known in the West. Thus Penkovsky's remarks fill out a generally well-known picture of internecine squabbling among Soviet military and political leaders over the relative importance of missile forces in modern strategy. In other cases, and on many specific details, one must either accept him at his word, since "he ought to know," or simply leave the matter open. The ordinary reader is in no position to argue with Penkovsky's repeated declaration that 60 per cent of all Soviet embassy personnel are connected directly with the KGB (Committee of State Security: "civilian" intelligence and counter-intelligence) or the GRU (Chief Intelligence Directorate, directly under the Soviet General Staff with mainly military responsibilities). Support or rejection of such facts on the basis of open-source information must be highly conjectural.

In a very few instances, Penkovsky reports a fact or an interpretation which is open to question on the basis of other known information. Thus, for example, he says in a biographical chapter which can, more than other sections of the Papers, be credibly

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ascribed to his hand, that he did not know who N.S. Khrushchev was when in 1939 he visited Penkovsky's unit in the Ukraine. At that time Khrushchev had been first secretary of the Ukraine CP for over a year and it is somewhat doubtful that Penkovsky, an active Komsomolets, would not have recognized him. But, then, this point might have been garbled in transmission. All in all, there are not a great number of such apparent "flaws" in the Papers which readily strike the eye.

In several cases, Penkovsky's personal feelings and biases have caused him to engage in exaggerations. This is especially evident when he evaluates the policy aims and the purposive strategies of the top political leadership. The editors of the Papers appropriately point out that some of their contents require interpretive screening.

Thus, there are significant shortcomings in the Penkovsky Papers, in their form of presentation and in their content. But they are not damning shortcomings. There is nothing to indicate that, on balance, they are what they substantively purport to be, a kaleidoscopic image of Oleg Penkovsky's world as he saw it.

Who was Penkovsky?

Penkovsky was born on 23 August 1919 in the Caucasian town of Ordzhonikidze and died on 16 May 1963 before a firing squad in Moscow. The most significant fact about the intervening years is that they were filled with success. Penkovsky was always a man on the rise. Many achievements and few setbacks marked his career. As an officer of the artillery, seeing action in the Finnish campaign and on the Ukrainian front, and for later services, he received "thirteen decorations, five orders, and eight medals." His education included training for the artillery branch, specialized intelligence training course in modern missile technology, and completion of

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the regular course at the Frunze military academy. In the years after 1949 he was in the uninterrupted service of the GRU as a senior officer of its Near Eastern desk in Moscow and in the field as assistant military attache in Ankara. In November 1960 he was attached to the State Committee for the Coordination of Scientific Work, becoming the deputy chief of its foreign department. In this capacity he remained a colonel in the active service of the GRU, using his international responsibilities to the committee as a front for intelligence work.

Penkovsky's political credentials were unimpeachable, except in one respect. He joined the CPSU in 1940 after having been an active member of the Komsomol and serving as a politruk (political leader) of an artillery unit. His rapid rise in the Soviet intelligence apparatus attest to the fact that his loyalty to the party was unquestioned. There was one flaw which was undisclosed for many years: Penkovsky's father had fought and died for the Whites in 1919. Oleg never knew his father but appears to have ruminated considerably about his fate and the damage that could be done if this fact were unearthed. Only late in the game did the KGB begin to wonder who Penkovsky's father was but were unable to locate his grave.

In the course of his career Penkovsky came into contact with the great lights of the Soviet power elite, especially its military members. He had very close personal ties to Marshal S.S. Varentsov, chief of the operational missile forces (until the Penkovsky case broke), which dated from the war years. An opportune marriage was one of many assists in establishing a wide circle of important social connections. He enjoyed the considerable confidence of Ivan Serov, head of GRU from 1958.

One can readily see that Penkovsky represented a miraculous find for Western intelligence. He was incomparably well stationed to leak the most vital and varied information to his new employers. As a minor officer of the GRU, he was intimately familiar with the Soviet military intelligence apparatus and had access to highly

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classified General Staff material. His responsibilities in the State Committee for the Coordination of Scientific Work opened to him a vast treasure of technical military and economic secrets. His social as well as professional connections kept him in constant touch with high level military politics. Finally, his need to meet foreigners and to travel abroad for the State Committee (and for GRU) opened the channels required for the transmission of information to the West.

These then were Penkovsky's capabilities, his credentials as a spy for the West. The other side of the coin, his motivations, remains somewhat obscure. What made this "insider" who enjoyed the best which his political system had to offer betray that system? As Penkovsky tells it, he first became disillusioned with the party dictatorship and the communist system during the war when he developed the conviction that the army, if any institution, was the real guardian of the Russian people's interests. He relates that his personal disillusionment with the communist system turned into positive disgust when he began to rise in the echelons of the intelligence bureaucracy. Disgust then became a profound fear that the irresponsible adventures of Khrushchev would incinerate his homeland as well as much of the world and he determined to declare a secret war on his government in the name of peace and the Russian people.

None of this really explains, of course, why he went from the silent cynicism of many of his colleagues to outright treason. Psychological insecurities surely played their role, but he hardly chose a very secure avenue out of the problem. Penkovsky was never a democrat in the Western sense, a fact revealed by his total incomprehension of the tolerance shown in the West to communist parties and other groups regarded by him to be agents of Soviet power. He was charmed by the Western way of life, by its personal freedoms and its luxuries; but in the eleventh hour, when he knew the KGB was on his trail, he refused to defect. The military virtues never left him, it seems; he felt duty bound to his chosen post until the very end. No doubt a final answer to the question of Penkovsky's motivations will continue to elude his closest friends and his bitterest enemies alike.

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The World of Soviet Espionage

Penkovsky's career as a spy began long before he undertook to work for the West; it began in 1949 when he entered the GRU's Military Diplomatic Academy in Moscow. His long and intimate association with the Soviet intelligence system placed his revelations about that system among the most useful information which he transmitted to the West. It has been reported that, by leaking clues personally known to him, Penkovsky "blew" (trade jargon for disclosing purposely or accidentally one's own spy ring) a number of top-level Soviet agents in the West, including Georges Paques, a French civil servant who spied in the French Defense Ministry and in NATO Headquarters; Colonel Stig Wennerstrom, who spied as Sweden's military attache in Washington; and William Vassall, a clerk in the British admiralty.

Like several of his colleagues in Soviet intelligence who have defected to the West, Penkovsky reports in the Papers that Moscow's espionage apparatus is a vast net which covers the world, watches everything, employs any available cover, and uses every conceivable technique to achieve its ends. There are two principal Soviet organs engaged in espionage, the KGB and the GRU. While the GRU, for which Penkovsky worked, is an organ of the Soviet General Staff and concentrates almost exclusively on espionage, the KGB is both an espionage organ, larger and more powerful than the GRU, and a counter-intelligence agency engaged in the surveillance of Soviet citizens at home and abroad, including the personnel of GRU. It was the KGB which finally apprehended Penkovsky.

Penkovsky presents a list of Soviet agencies having international connections and responsibilities which contain a substantial proportion of KGB and GRU personnel. The list comprises over two dozen bodies. He reports further that among Soviet embassy personnel two out of five are in the KGB and one out of five in the GRU, and adds "obviously most of our other embassy employees are regularly co-opted for intelligence purposes." Stretching the point a bit,

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he says, "We do not have diplomats such as the West understand the term. We do all kinds of work except diplomatic."

One of his most interesting observations informs us that all Soviet foreign operations are directed by the KGB and/or the GRU.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade exist as such only in Moscow. Abroad everything is controlled by the KGB and us, the GRU....

Prior to my trip to Turkey [1955-56] I thought that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the embassies were important organizations with authority. But now I know that there is only the Central Committee of the CPSU, and in the embassies the two rezidenturas: the GRU and the KGB. They are the ones who handle everything. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs stays in the background.

It is significant that Penkovsky stresses the tight centralization of all foreign and intelligence operations directly under the Central Committee, by which he means actually the apparatus of the Central Committee and its departments, particularly the Administrative Department, the Department of Foreign Political Personnel, and the Main Political Administration of the Soviet Armed Forces. In fact, according to Penkovsky, leading members of the Presidium, particularly Khrushchev and Koslov in their day, take an intimate personal interest in intelligence affairs.

The organization of Penkovsky's own outfit, the GRU, encompasses a number of functional and topical subdivisions including one for the allies of the Soviet Union. "We are engaged in espionage against every country in the world," says Penkovsky. "And this includes our friends, the countries of the people's democracies." Originally the section for the socialist countries included China and North Korea; but even before the Sino-Soviet dispute became public, these units were shifted to the Far Eastern desk, principally concerned with non-communist nations.

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Like other "insiders" of Soviet intelligence, Penkovsky points out the great stress which Moscow places upon the "spook" or covert and illegal aspects of information gathering. The Soviets have a definite tendency to understress the painstaking analysis of open sources, which occupies about 90 per cent of Western intelligence efforts. This is particularly significant in view of the fact that Soviet intelligence is directed for the most part against open societies where information of vast strategic importance can be gleaned from the daily press. Once Serov is reported to have complained "that all our attaches [in the USA] are doing is collecting papers and rubbish; everything of value came from the Illegals."

Thus the "Illegals" play a vast and crucial role in Soviet intelligence. Penkovsky presents many fascinating little details about how these "Illegals" work. The Papers don't add a great deal that is new to the already vast literature on real-life espionage and its techniques, but they do prove once again that actual fact can be as intriguing as the fanciful gimmickry of the contemporary spy novel. Soviet illegal intelligence collecting is managed through a network of underground rezidenturas, often directly in touch with Moscow, each of which runs its ring of agents recruited by various means from the local population. Of course the whole panoply of gadgets and dodges is employed to establish contact and transmit information: radios, secret writing, dead drops where messages are hidden, and elaborately casual meetings between agents and officers of the rezidentura.

One of the most entertaining sections of the Penkovsky Papers was admittedly not written by him, it comprises a lecture by Lieutenant-Colonel Ivan Prikhodko to prospective operatives in the United States on how to manage an espionage ring in America. The instructor admonishes his students to acquire an intimate knowledge of the New York subway system before they attempt to employ it for espionage purposes, a lesson appropriate for any non-resident of New York whatever his purposes. He also makes certain pertinent observations on the effectiveness of American counter-spy activities, which it

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will be remembered came in for a lot of sarcastic disparagement from Mr. Molody-Lonsdale. Prikhodko points out coldly and, one would assume, objectively that the United States is "a country with a highly developed counter-intelligence effort." He implies that the FBI has drawn even the squirrels into this effort, indicating that dead drops in America's many public parks are often discovered by these four-legged counter-spies who destroy or carry off the information deposited in them.

Lecturer Prikhodko, peering through his own ideological spectacles of course, devotes considerable attention to analyzing the national characteristics of the American people and how they can be exploited for espionage purposes. He finds them highly materialistic and mercenary, hence susceptible to financial blandishments. To their credit he points out that they are extremely difficult to discipline and take very unkindly to orders. Thus Soviet operatives must get out of the habit of saying "I order you to do..." or "You must..." in handling such Americans as they are able to recruit. He says, "Americans, to a larger degree than representatives of many other peoples, have a natural love of freedom and independence, and do not like discipline." He also notes that Soviet operatives must be careful not to wound the patriotic sensibilities of their American agents by insulting the memory of American heroes or challenging the superiority of American culture. Back on the financial theme, he informs his students that recruitment with money can be rather expensive since the average American worker enjoys a very high standard of living. The Soviet agent himself will have to have a large personal budget as well because in American it is the custom to wear a white shirt only for one day.

Espionage is a big business for the Soviet Union. And like all business, it has its elements of competition, even within the "firm" so to speak. Some of Penkovsky's most interesting remarks allude to the presence of intense, constant competition between the KGB and the GRU. The GRU calls the KGB "our neighbors", Penkovsky reports, but adds that "We constantly compete with each other in espionage. We try to prove that we work better and they try to prove the opposite." Once, while in the field, he sent a complaint about one of his superiors to the top via KGB channels, evoking^a sharp reprimand from his GRU colleagues for ratting to the "enemy".

He notes that the GRU is constantly on the watch for which of its own men are actually informants for the KGB. Things looked up somewhat when General Serov came over to the GRU from the KGB in 1958; "fundamentally, however, there were no real changes in the KGB relationship."

Of Missiles and Marshals

Penkovsky was essentially a military man, and regarded himself as such throughout his career. Of all Soviet institutions, the only one for which he retained any feelings of loyalty was the armed forces. It was originally his sense of military professionalism which set him on an anti-Soviet course. Though a party member, he hated the Party and its leadership. He was particularly resentful, as are most Soviet officers, according to Penkovsky, of the system of political controls with which the Party hems in the military establishment to prevent the growth of an eccentric power factor in internal Soviet politics.

Penkovsky's hero -- a fact which reveals a great deal about him personally -- was Marshal Zhukov, whom he calls the modern Suvorov; "He understood the soldier's soul." Zhukov's effort to insulate the army from pervasive political control, the campaign which eventually led to his ouster in 1957, is deemed particularly praiseworthy by Penkovsky. While Zhukov was by no means universally liked by his military colleagues, a fact upon which Khrushchev capitalized to oust him, he was universally respected. Many officers regarded him as the protector of the officer corps; when the great troop cuts began in 1955, Zhukov took pains to shield the officer corps from decimation.

In the wake of Zhukov's removal, the Soviet armed forces moved into a period of radical reorganization, a process of adjustment, actually initiated under Zhukov, to the requirements of the nuclear era. Penkovsky devotes considerable attention to the

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vigorous disputes which accompanied this period of adjustment. The Papers fail to add a great deal new on this score to what is already known in the West. The picture which is presented is often rather confused since Penkovsky was, as an intelligence officer, somewhat on the periphery of the debates and decisions. But he was in an excellent position to gauge the mood of his fellow officers and, of course, to see the relevant documents, many of which he transmitted to the West. By and large, the picture presented conforms to the impressions Western observers have developed from the open military literature.

First of all, the Soviet officer corps was uniformly resentful of the high-handed manner in which Khrushchev handled military problems, relegating to himself the role of number-one strategic expert and fabricating a reputation as a military hero. This resentment deepened as his techniques became more dictatorial and his style of politics increasingly "hare-brained". As Penkovsky tells it, even Malinovsky, Khrushchev's hand-picked man, showed signs of antipathy although he played the role of an obedient servitor in any personal confrontations with the First Secretary; "a very dull figure indeed!" says Penkovsky of Malinovsky. Nevertheless, rumors circulated that he would be replaced. Undoubtedly, military resentment of Khrushchev permitted his lieutenants on the Presidium to count on military neutrality in October 1964.

Sizable segments of the Soviet armed forces were also fearful of the consequences, personal and military, of the direction which Khrushchev's "new look" in military policy took after 1960. Many felt that the necessary emphasis being placed upon nuclear missiles was being accompanied by a dangerous neglect of modernized conventional weapons. Penkovsky's personal friend, Marshal Varentsov of the operational-tactical missile forces, interestingly enough shared this fear although he had a definite vested interest in the new technology and went on public record in support of its superiority over traditional weapons in the field.

But the marshals never managed to forge a united front against the Khrushchevian policies to which they objected because interservice rivalry was at least as strong as common resentments and because no military leader dared expose himself alone to the displeasure of Khrushchev.

Penkovsky relates that military resentment sometimes took the form of nostalgia for the supposedly more orderly routine that prevailed under Stalin:

The entire army is in a state of turmoil; everyone in the army recalls Stalin and says that under Stalin things were better, that is, Stalin never insulted the army, but this scoundrel [Khrushchev] has dismissed good officers from the army. And now this same scoundrel lifts his goblet high and drinks a toast, saying, "I love our army." The officers say to themselves, "Right now you are drinking a toast to my health and tomorrow I must die for you. If I do stay alive, then two years from now you will throw me out again."

Morale must have really been bad for officers to wish Stalin alive again.

Khrushchev's reorganization of the Soviet armed forces was accompanied by a vigorous debate on strategic doctrine aimed at bringing Soviet military thought up to date. One of Penkovsky's most significant contributions to the West was the supply of a so-called "special collection" of articles on strategy compiled in 1960 which elaborated on Khrushchev's new missile doctrine. It was one particular theme in these articles and in the debate as a whole which caused Penkovsky a great deal of concern and played a role in his decision to work for the West. This was his conviction that the Soviet Union was evolving a first-strike nuclear strategy, perhaps with the intention of launching preventative war against the West.

The possibility that the Soviet Union has at one time or another toyed with the idea of a first-strike strategy has long been a controversial point in Western discussions about Soviet strategic doctrine. The excerpts from the "special collection" which the Penkovsky Papers offer do not go very far in clearing up this point. It is apparent, however, that the Soviets recognized the degree to which surprise might be decisive in the nuclear age especially insofar as their very great strategic inferiority might make it totally impossible to strike second. They therefore may have considered for a time that striking first was the

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only strategy for survival, if they could be sure their enemies were actually planning an attack themselves. Naturally the Soviet General Staff was duty bound to consider such possibilities. And in Penkovsky's mind, possibilities were converted into virtual certainties.

On other fearsome military themes, Penkovsky accuses the Soviet Union of planning the employment of deadly chemical weapons if war breaks out, that such weapons are actually in the hands of troops, and will be used even if the West does not use them first. He also indicates that the Soviets have no intention to limit the use of nuclear radiation as an offensive by-product of atomic explosion; nor, as open Soviet sources also attest, do the Soviets have any interest in attempting to spare the destruction of cities should nuclear war ever break out.

Penkovsky sent out a large amount of technical information on Soviet missile developments, rather little of which appears in the Papers. But he does include some interesting personal observations and details. In general, his estimate was that Khrushchev's boastful missile rattling during the years 1960-1962 far outstripped actual achievements in the creation of usable military hardware. Thus, at a time when Khrushchev was promising to "defend Cuba" with rockets, the Soviet Union barely possessed any operational ICBMs. Penkovsky's estimates surely played a role in U.S. policy during the Cuban crisis of 1962 where Soviet lack of confidence in its strategic posture was amply demonstrated.

Noteworthy details: The Soviet Union has tested missiles with live nuclear warheads. At least at the time of Penkovsky's testimony, the Soviet Union was testing missiles on two ranges with their impact areas in East Europe, one in Poland and one in Rumania; Penkovsky claims that test shots were often rather inaccurate. It took fourteen SAM missiles to bring down Garry Powers in 1960 and one of them downed a Soviet MiG 19 sent to intercept him. Before Gagarin's

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orbiting of the earth, the Soviets lost several cosmonauts in unsuccessful attempts. An accidental explosion at a missile site in 1960 killed three hundred people, including Marshal of the Rocket Forces Nedelin. In 1962 Penkovsky guessed that it would be three to four years before the Chinese exploded their first nuclear device.

Portrait of the Party Leadership

In one respect the student of Soviet politics must be disappointed in the Penkovsky Papers. The picture which Penkovsky presents of the top Soviet leadership, its individual figures, and their politics is singularly sketchy and, in places, unbalanced. Now quite apart from Penkovsky's intense dislike of Khrushchev personally and the party leadership in general, his apparent political short-sightedness when looking upward is quite understandable. In fact it stems from a basic characteristic of the totalitarian system. Penkovsky was a third echelon official involved in highly important work but he was not a politician, except in the sense that all Soviet officials must be politicians of sorts in order to survive. He was essentially an executor, a fulfiller of orders. As such he was a medium through which political power was exercised, but he did not possess it or generate it.

There are two political echelons in the Soviet system: the top one, of course, comprising the Presidium of the Central Committee and part of the Secretariat; and the second one composed of department heads in the Central Committee apparatus and heads of key state committees and ministries, on the one hand, and the most important regional party figures, on the other. The top rank is fully political; the second is partially political and largely executive, depending on the distribution of power at the top. Penkovsky was a member of neither of these ranks. He was able to form a picture of what was going on in portions of the second political echelon, its military components. But the center of

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Soviet political life was all but closed to his view. Even as a highly placed member of the elite, he was able to say less about the real political center of his system than any moderately well-informed graduate student of political science can report about the inner workings of American or British government. In the Soviet Union, as in all dictatorships, the walls between those who do and those who do not possess political power are virtually impenetrable.

The inadequacy of Penkovsky's perceptions of the center is rather easily illustrated. None of the members of the Presidium acquire any real personality in his reports, with the exception of Khrushchev, and here the picture is distorted. Despite his feeling that Khrushchev faced widespread antipathy in the country at all levels, Penkovsky is totally unable to provide a full picture of opposition in the Presidium, although he does give one indication that it existed at the time of his reports: Kosygin complained at times that Khrushchev was wrecking the economy. He heard this little detail only because his immediate superior had married Kosygin's daughter. Penkovsky has almost nothing to say about the power of such figures as Kozlov and Brezhnev. With the exception of Khrushchev, the members of the Presidium are portrayed as sychophants and toadies, or ignored.

Penkovsky's personal attitude toward Khrushchev was a crucial factor in his motivation to work for the West. The picture which he offers of the First Secretary is at times little short of demonic. Khrushchev is depicted as driven by a compulsion to achieve success in international adventures, even at the risk of nuclear war. The specific adventure which preoccupies Penkovsky is the effort to expell the Allies from Berlin. At times Penkovsky accuses Khrushchev of actually planning to launch a war when the Soviet Union had become strong enough. At times Khrushchev is portrayed as wanting to avoid war, but willing to take risks because he regarded the West as weak-willed. The other side of the picture, which must

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find its place in an objective evaluation, Khrushchev's public recognition of the strength of the West, the catastrophic consequences of nuclear war, the need for peaceful coexistence, is ignored by Penkovsky. His fear of what is possible and his compulsion to warn the West deeply colored his appreciation of Khrushchev's policies. At one point he argues that Khrushchev wanted to use the 22nd Party Congress as a great forum to ratify a policy of aggression against the West, totally neglecting the issues that actually came to dominate that Congress.

As a spy Penkovsky was an enormously useful man for the West. As a commentator on the Soviet system, he suffered from large limitations of mind and perspective. For this reason his picture of the system, with its constant stress on the unsavory and the demonic, cannot be taken as complete. But it is nevertheless an important contribution, a reminder of the darker tendencies which remain below the surface. Penkovsky's world as he saw it is clear evidence, once again, that reason and goodwill lead a very perilous existence in a closed political system.

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