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## THE 13TH "CHRONICLE"

(See end for summary)

The 13th issue of the Chronicle of Current Events reached the West two weeks ago. Whereas all previous issues have been dated the last day of every second month, there is no specific mention of the 13th Chronicle's publication date. However, as the 28th of April is the latest date mentioned, it is most likely that the time of issue was during the last week of that month. (1) As usual, the contents provide detailed information concerning the fate of dissidents mentioned in earlier Chronicles, as well as new information concerning protestors, the Chronicle and samizdat in general. The contents are divided into three parts: 1) legal procedures taken by the authorities against persons holding views with which the regime disagrees; 2) news of samizdat; and 3) brief reports on protest activities throughout the Soviet Union.

The first section provides information on trials in Moscow, Gor'ky, Khar'kov, Riga, Kiev, and in two towns in the Uzbek SSR. In accordance with established practice, the authorities declared many of the defendants "irresponsible for their actions," refused to allow the latter's appearance at their own trials (thereby avoiding potential embarrassing scenes caused by denials of guilt and protests over illegal procedure), and dispensed with the accused through indefinite commitment to special psychiatric hospitals.

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(1) One Western news agency has claimed the date of issue was 28 April (Reuter, 21 May 1970).

In the case of V.L. Gershuni, a 39-year-old stone-mason and nephew of the founder of the Socialist-Revolutionary party, accused of anti-Soviet slander under article 190-1 of the RSFSR Criminal Code (for possession of a document in defense of P.G. Grigorenko), the official verdict took no account of the testimony of witnesses at the trial. Since they were Gershuni's co-workers, they testified on the basis of a personal knowledge of the defendant. According to the Chronicle,

the witnesses testified that GERSHUNI censured the introduction of [Soviet] troops into the CSSR, that he brought newspapers [to work], including Rude Pravo, that GERSHUNI was well-educated, widely-read and was convinced of what he said; they said that GERSHUNI was not the only one to lead discussions on political subjects -- and GERSHUNI was not the only one to have a critical attitude to the internal and foreign policy of the present leadership. The witnesses rejected the idea that GERSHUNI was psychologically abnormal and emphasized that he was a good worker and a morally sound person.

Despite this testimony, the court agreed with the findings of the Serbski Institute and with those of a special Ideological Board of Examiners which had found Gershuni's writings and activities to be anti-Soviet and ruled that Gershuni, who was not allowed to attend his own trial, be committed to a special psychiatric hospital. In protest against this measure, Gershuni went on a hunger strike for two weeks and was finally placed in the political prisoners' wing of Butyrki prison.

The case of 19-year-old Valeria Novodvorskaya was similar. Also found to be unstable by the Serbski Institute, she was tried in absentia and without her knowledge by a Moscow court last March. Her crime was the distribution of a poem at the Palace of Congresses last December in which she described the tragedies, wrought by the Communist Party on the people of the Soviet Union. (2) She is now officially a paranoid schizophrenic and committed to the special psychiatric ward of Kazan prison. (3) At the trial, the procurator made the extraordinary statement, which itself hints of real paranoia, that Novodvorskaya's actions of writing and distributing her

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(2) For a translation of this poem, see The Chicago Tribune, 21 May 1970.

(3) For a description of this institution, see Chronicle #10.

poem "...accord with the acts of the terrorists who shot at the cosmonauts." (4)

Judicial judgements of this nature are also recorded outside of Moscow. The most recent news on the fate of three Gorky University graduates and a history teacher (the case was mentioned in Chronicle, #11 and #12) is related. Arrested last summer for circulating leaflets in which they opposed a revival of Stalinism, they were charged with anti-Soviet slander. (5) Although a psychiatric examination was to be ordered for one of the defendants, it was not performed and he was charged with the others, as an ordinary criminal. This change in plans was possibly due to a threat by his wife, whose parents were persecuted during the Stalin era, to commit self-immolation if her husband were committed to an asylum. At the trial last March, the defendants protested openly in court against the return of Stalinism, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the repressions against Crimean Tatars, and the persecution of persons for their religious beliefs. On 24 April, the court found the defendants guilty and passed sentences on the four totalling twenty-three years in concentration camps.

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- (4) This is a reference to an unexplained event that took place on 22 January 1969, when a 22-year-old Leningrad resident, Il'yin, fired several shots at parading Soviet cosmonauts in Moscow, killing their chauffeur and wounding a motorcycle escort. Il'yin was also judged to be schizophrenic and was committed to a special psychiatric hospital. See Izvestia, 21 March 1970.
- (5) The most commonly used statutes in these cases are articles 70, 72, and 190-1 of the RSFSR Criminal Code or their equivalents in the codes of other republics. These are almost open-end regulations that allow the courts to interpret any individual opinion that attacks or differs from opinions sanctioned by the regime as detrimental to the state and society and, hence, a criminal act.

In Khar'kov, two trials were held against three persons charged with similar crimes: distributing samizdat literature and compiling and signing two letters which were published in the West, one in defense of P.G. Grigorenko and the other an appeal to the U.N. The defendants, V.V. Ponomarev, V.G. Nedobor, and A.Z. Levin, were sentenced to three years in a concentration camp.

Punitive measures, however, were not limited to the defendants themselves. The Chronicle records that two friends and a relative of the accused were dismissed from their jobs after the conclusion of the trial.

This first section of the 13th Chronicle ends with shorter notices of similar events in the Ukraine, Latvia, and Uzbekistan.

The second section -- News of Samizdat -- contains some of the most interesting information in this issue. It presents an accurate synopsis of a letter sent by A.D. Sakharov, V.F. Turchin and R.A. Medvedev to Kosygin, Brezhnev and Podgorny on 19 March 1970, and then cites a letter sent by S.P. Pisarev to the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences. The author is a Communist of 52 years' standing, a professional Party worker, a decorated veteran and an invalid since World War II. He protested to Stalin about the Doctor's Affair three months before the dictator's death. For this, he was incarcerated for two years, one and a half of which were spent in the Leningrad Prison psychiatric ward. Although he was diagnosed as a schizophrenic by the Serbski Institute, he was rehabilitated in 1956 and declared psychologically absolutely well. In the aforementioned letter, Pisarev draws the attention of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences to the "mistakes" committed by the Serbski Institute and explains the reasons for them:

The Institute and its special stations (i.e. prison hospitals) are subordinated to administrative investigating agencies (formally they are under the direction of the Ministry of Health) and are used by them 'frequently in complete contradiction to the objective facts of medical science' - in other words: The Institute and the special stations provide a pseudoscientific sanction for the indeterminate isolation of psychologically healthy people in prison hospitals.

The Institute was deeply involved in such activities during the period of the personality cult, but this activity was exposed in 1956 by a special Central Committee



Commission headed by the responsible Central Committee member, A.I. Kuznetsov. Hundreds of healthy people were released from psychiatric hospitals. Those guilty of 'mistaken' diagnoses were accused by name, in particular, D.R. Luntz, (7) then a dotsent [assistant professor - ], now a professor. The Commission came to the conclusion that it was indispensable to reorganize the business of psychiatric commissions and to place the Serbski Institute together with the prison-psychiatric hospitals of Kazan and Leningrad entirely under the Ministry of Health.

However the report and the materials of the Commission were not reviewed in a single case, and after two years were placed in the archives. The members and leaders of the Commission were removed from the Central Committee apparatus under various pretexts; the guilty parties were not only not punished, but remained at their posts. To the two special prisons several more were added and the evil practices of the Institute, although to a lesser degree, continue.

This section also includes material reflecting the growth of samizdat literature in organized form. The Chronicle itself is a testament to this progressive development. We now learn that two more collections of such documents are appearing. Already mentioned in Chronicles #10 and #11, the Collection of Selected Samizdat Texts, edited by V.N. Chalidze, is appearing with increasing regularity. Similar to the Chronicle in its inclusion of historical and legal documents concerning opposition to the present regime and a desire for change, it differs in that it also provides commentary and criticism of samizdat material. The last issue of the Chronicle notes that Collection #3 (January-February, 1970) and #4 (March-April, 1970) have already appeared, and it provides brief information as to the contents.

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- (7) Dr. Luntz has since been on the psychiatric examining board that declared P.G. Grigorenko of unsound mind and, more recently, is a member of the board that is presently examining Zhores A. Medvedev. (See Chronicle #12 and Reuter, 5 June 1970.)

The other collection represents the first national journal of this sort to appear. Entitled The Messenger of the Ukraine (Vestnik Ukrainy), its first issue appeared in January of this year. The introduction states that it is not the spokesman of any organization or group. According to the Chronicle, "The Herald contains many facts concerning the violation of universal democratic and national rights in the Ukraine during the period 1968-1969 and cites various documents at great length." In describing this journal, the editors of the Chronicle provide revealing information about their own publication. "The collection [the Herald --]," say the editors, "is compiled on the model of the Moscow [emphasis supplied--gvd] 'Chronicles'." We can be fairly certain, then, that the Chronicle itself is being issued in or around Moscow.

The third and final section, "Brief Reports," includes the usual short notices on the whereabouts of imprisoned protestors and brief references to protest actions about which more information may become available in subsequent issues. The Crimean Tatar, M. Dzhemilev, for example, has been transferred from Tashkent, along with Ilya Gabai, (6) to the KGB isolation section of Lefortovo prison in Moscow. Reportedly, P.G. Grigorenko is still in Tashkent, although a more recent Western source noted that he was transferred to the psychiatric clinic in Chernyakhovsk near the Baltic port of Kaliningrad. (7) A new feature has also been added to this section. For the first time, a "Letters to the Editor" column has appeared. Although the contribution of only one letter is modest, the sender is a prominent member of the Democratic Opposition -- Pyotr I. Yakir, one of the fifteen members of the Action Group for the Defense of Civil Rights in the U.S.S.R. Dated 28 April, his remarks are addressed specifically to Andrei Amal'rik (8) in response to his own work Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984? Unlike other samizdat critics who, according to Yakir, have accused Amal'rik of Russophobia, Yakir praises the "...precision, honesty and impartiality..." of the author's position and the courage of his action. Although he does not agree with all the views stated in the pamphlet, he encourages Amal'rik in his work and pays tribute to his integrity.

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- (6) See Chronicle #12 and RFE Research report #0608, "The Chronicle Continues into the Seventies," of 3 June 1970, by G.v.D.
- (7) Reuter, 1 June 1970.
- (8) Andrei Amal'rik has since been arrested, removed to Sverdlovsk, and might be tried under article 190-1 of the RSFSR Criminal Code. See International Herald Tribune, 29 May 1970 and The Daily Telegraph, 23 May 1970.

Yakir's letter is also interesting for its remarks about the strength of the Democratic Opposition. "Although at present its social base is indeed very narrow, and the Movement itself exists under very difficult circumstances, the ideas which it has propounded have begun to be widely spread throughout the country, and this is the beginning of an irreversible process of self-liberation." [Emphasis supplied] If this is true, then perhaps Amal'rik's prediction will not materialize and we will live to see a progressively reformed Soviet Union in 1984.

Summary: The 13th issue of the Chronicle of Current Events arrived in the West two weeks ago. The documents include supplementary information on events mentioned in previous issues as well as some interesting new information, part of which indicates that the Chronicle is based in Moscow. More data is provided on the use of psychiatric examinations and commitment to insane asylums as punishment for unofficial political activity. The existence of two new journals similar to the Chronicle is also reported, one of which is the first national samizdat journal similar in type to the Chronicle, The Messenger of the Ukraine.

G.v.D.