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HELPING THE NEW RUSSIA: A PRIMER FOR DONORS

By John K. Andrews, Jr.

Introduction: About That Article of Faith

Whether or not events of the 1990s bear out the fashionable assumption that the Cold War is over, with the passing of the 1980s we are clearly entering a period when America's relationship with the Soviet Union will be closer, more routine, and more diversified than ever before. This will mean not only greater engagement at the government level, but also a dizzying expansion of nongovernment contacts.

In Colorado, just to take the example with which we at the Independence Institute are most familiar, some sort of delegation or business exploration trip is now heading for the USSR every few days. Certain Colorado political leaders and opinionmakers are promoting trade ties, sister-city links, professional exchanges, and citizen diplomacy in giddy profusion.

In this mood, which is becoming pervasive, sophisticated calculation of the dynamics and risks of Soviet reform no longer counts for much. As an influential university dean in Denver has been exhorting his audiences since returning from Moscow and Leningrad last summer, "Helping Gorbachev is an article of faith."

Much of this activity is being financed by foundation grants and corporate contributions rapidly mounting into the many millions, as the editors know from both our exposure to the fundraising in this state and our relationship with a founda-

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"In the absence of radical reforms of the Soviet system [Western economic and technological] assistance could serve only to prop up an ailing system and delay the advent of democracy. It would be like pouring water into the sand." -- Andrei Sakharov, Member of Supreme Soviet, London, June 1989

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ation elsewhere in the United States which requested input from Independence on its growing investment in citizen exchanges and its consideration of direct grantmaking in the USSR.

Executives from a number of prominent foundations, including officials of a philanthropic umbrella group called the Council on Foundations, toured the Soviet Union in March 1989 and September 1989 under the tutelage of the left-liberal Center for US/USSR Initiatives. James Joseph, president of the Council on Foundations, wrote after returning from the March trip:

"The real story in the Soviet Union may be the emergence of a charitable sector, the flourishing of private initiatives... planted on fertile ground and likely to grow and prosper.... [Americans should not] ignore this opportunity to reintroduce philanthropy into the minds of a people and the hearts of a culture that is struggling for a moral revival."

These rosy sentiments typify the phenomenon which Professor Roy Godson of Georgetown University has described as follows: "Interest in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is running at an all time high in American philanthropy. Articles are popping up everywhere reporting on a new breed of [Soviet] charitable nongovernmental organizations. And foundations here are becoming inundated with requests for information... [but] those versed in Soviet history are well aware that... it is only prudent that American grantmakers... be critically equipped to appraise these new Soviet institutions." (See reprint of complete article at the end of this paper.)

The Soviet trip report filed by Independence president John Andrews at the request of what we will call, to protect confidentiality, the XYZ Trust, may not have been what some officers of that philanthropy wanted to hear. Andrews' observations are directly responsive, however, to the cautions voiced by Roy Godson.

He argues that donors and other nongovernment players in the West must target their assistance not merely on the hopeful side effects of Gorbachevism but specifically on the new Russian freedom movement. "Water the seeds, not the sand" was his summation based on Andrei Sakharov's warning quoted above.

As a service to friends in the nonprofit sector throughout the country, Independence decided to adapt the XYZ report, removing proprietary material, so that it could be published in our issue paper series. The timeliness of the subject matter speaks for itself.

WATER THE SEEDS, NOT THE SAND
Report of the Independence Institute to the XYZ Foundation
November 1989

One Foundation's Hopes

In August 1989, a staff member of the XYZ Foundation wrote to the Independence Institute as follows: "The foundation has undertaken modest grantmaking activities supporting selected citizen exchanges between the U.S. and USSR. During this initial stage of our funding strategy, our interest is twofold: to enhance and encourage better understanding between American and Soviet citizens, and to investigate the potential for direct grantmaking efforts in the Soviet Union.

"We feel that perhaps in a small way these preliminary efforts could help nurture glasnost at the community level and assist the Soviets with their massive problems of restructuring processes and systems.

"Your report should probe the initial questions you submitted [regarding progress toward freedom, democracy, federalism, and better treatment of nationalities], plus your observations relative to what specific need for American technical assistance and expertise you find. More generally, what is the real growth potential for citizen diplomacy efforts between the U.S. and USSR?"

Context of the Report: Who, Where, and How

The observations in this report were compiled during a two-week tour of the Soviet Union in the fall of 1989, beginning October 9 in Moscow, continuing to Tashkent, capital of the Uzbek Republic and fourth largest city in the USSR, through two other cities in that southern Moslem region bordering Afghanistan, then to Leningrad through October 22.

The author, a political analyst and educator, was part of a 50-person study tour comprising political leaders from 13 states. He was assisted in the fact-finding work by several members of the Colorado General Assembly, two experienced journalists, and a Russian-speaking legislative consultant.

"So did you meet with President Gorbachev?" one of the more provincial businessman friends of the Independence Institute asked us upon our return to Denver. No, not with him or anyone remotely near him in the Soviet hierarchy. But we did meet with some individuals whose names are presumably known to the President and whose activities doubtless worry him.

And more to the point for this report, we found ourselves conducting a sort of field test on both the mechanics and the atmospherics of those very bridge-building activities the XYZ Trust seeks to explore. We were an exchange group of ordinary Americans, and during the trip we actually began arrangements for return visits to Colorado by several ordinary Russians.

Moreover, the author's 15 years as a nonprofit entrepreneur, grantee of numerous foundations, and survivor on soft money, equipped him to identify in some degree with the dozens of potential Soviet grantees we met -- to envision the opportunities and pitfalls of this kaleidoscopic new landscape through their eyes.

The report makes no claim to omniscience. Traveling as private citizens and making contacts informally, our group was not in a position to form definitive conclusions about the USSR today. But our experiences and interviews, because of their very spontaneity, can be taken as a reliable indication of what is now possible within the rapidly evolving context of the Gorbachev reforms.

Framing: Why the Issue is Freedom

Specific assistance to the Gorbachev reforms, however, is not the focus of this report. Nor would it be realistic, as yet, to focus on the possibilities for generalized Western assistance to meet developmental needs in the USSR.

Rather the overriding concern of nongovernment organizations in the United States at present must be to assist the Soviet freedom movement.

The justification and means for doing this may not be self-evident, since private philanthropy in the United States generally strives to remain apolitical. But different considerations arise in a society where for the past 72 years everything has been politicized. "In this country, to be an honest person, you cannot excuse yourself from being a political person," Tamara Grigoriyants of Glasnost magazine told us in her Moscow apartment as a KGB agent paced outside.

The urgent task for 1990 and beyond is to support those who are working to expand and consolidate an ever larger depoliticized space in what was until very recently, and could easily become again, the suffocating totalist web of Communist life.

This means much more than merely channeling resources to the many worthy groups and activities which Americans would regard as independent or nongovernmental. It requires a shrewd, skeptical, selective, and strategic determination to identify precisely those seminal forces of change which can, if successful, bring about organic and irreversible alterations in the Soviet system toward constitutional democracy, guaranteed individual rights, and a market economy -- to identify those forces and bend all effort toward nurturing them and them alone.

Worthy nongovernment activities have always existed at a certain level in the USSR, and during several previous periods they have blossomed to something near the luxuriance of the post-1985 era. We Westerners must remind ourselves, however, that this sphere of life, which exists in our societies as a matter of right, to the present day exists in the USSR only at the sufferance of the Communist Party and state.

Extensive American assistance to Soviet beneficiaries in this sphere at this time, at the opportunity cost of failing to leverage the same resources into rule-changing and attitude-changing activities leading to permanent depoliticization, would not only risk the ephemeral result suggested by Sakharov's warning about water in the sand. It would very probably also violate the Hippocratic caution for intervention with any ailing system, "First do no harm."

For if the effect were to palliate some few of the material and psychological miseries of daily existence under communism (and why else would the assistance be given, except in hope of such palliation), thus venting a bit of the immense human discontent from below that is forcing changes in the regime above, then the aid would be flatly counter-productive.

Any outside assistance, however well-intentioned, which directly or indirectly increases the survivability of the Leninist regime, cruelly disserves the long-run interest of the Soviet people. Those who think this sounds harsh can ask the Poles, the Hungarians, the East Germans, and the Czechs which form of treatment breaks the totalitarian sickness better, soothing palliatives or bitter cathartics.

Satisfaction is as fungible as money. Helping make daily life a little better now for some Soviets may perversely weaken the dynamic of massive and painful rebirth through which life for all Soviets could eventually be made far better.

Besides which, those brave and hopeful little enclaves of nongovernment activity which are there today to receive a grant or sponsor an exchange, face depressing odds of not being there a year or five years from now, so long as failure to effect formal and fundamental change in the political rules leaves them hostage to bureaucratic whimsy.

So it is the freedom movement, those organizations engaged in irreversibly depoliticizing wide areas of Soviet life while democratizing the rest, upon which nongovernment assistance from Americans must focus. Political realism and philanthropic prudence actually admit of no other focal point for outside private aid.

Since Western governments can dare offer little or no material support to the nongovernment democracy forces inside the USSR, and since the future well-being of ordinary Soviets depends on the ascendancy of those forces much more than on the virtousity of Mr. Gorbachev or any other establishment figure, a fateful responsibility appears to rest on the nongovernment sector in the wealthy nations of the free world.

The fog lifts, we begin to see a clear convergence of those most needing help inside Russia and those least constrained in giving help from outside, and here at the crux of an historic choice stand all of us in the think tanks, the foundations, the trade unions, the churches, the corporations, the universities, the political parties, the civic organizations, the ethnic alliances, the professional associations, and all the other mediating institutions that are the glory of American pluralism.

Will we seize the moment and meet the challenge? Russia's fate does not hang on what we decide; that is largely in its own people's hands. But we can surely make a difference at the margin, and we shall long have to live with the consequences of choosing poorly or well.

I. POSSIBILITIES FOR CONNECTING WITH THE SOVIET FREEDOM MOVEMENT

What did the Colorado fact-finding delegation learn about the movement for individual freedom and democracy in the USSR? How viable is that movement? How accessible are its leaders to outside contacts? What kind of nongovernmental assistance could it accept from abroad?

Viewed from the Kremlin in Moscow, the movement is not a serious contender for power as yet. The democracy caucus in the Supreme Soviet is estimated at no more than 5 to 10 percent of that body's 450 members. Liberalization of the fundamentally totalitarian structure of the Brezhnev constitution of 1977, particularly the notorious Article 6 granting a monopoly of power to the Communist Party, does not appear imminent.

But the view from the street in major Soviet cities is quite different. Activist groups are proliferating, political debate is increasingly bold, impatience for democratic reforms is mounting, and with the reformers we met there is a sense of eleventh-hour urgency bred of equal parts desperation and hope.

Tamara Grigoriyants of Glasnost magazine, undeterred despite the continuing pattern of arrests, warrantless searches, and other official harassment she and her husband Sergei have endured for presuming to reify the Gorbachev slogan as a truly independent political journal, describes the new mood this way:

"People have lost their fear. Three years ago most people [working for democracy] did only what the government permitted. Now society itself decides what is permitted. People feel that if we don't do something now, the opportunity will slip away."

The Grigoriyants in independent journalism, Father Victor Popkov in church renewal, Fuat Ablamitov in nationality issues, Ekaterina Podoltseva in political organizing, and Kiril Boldovsky in labor organizing -- our interviews with these grassroots leaders typify five significant elements of the untidy, unpredictable, and still largely uncharted freedom movement.

The activities of all five meet the distinction made above: they are not engaged simply in meeting human needs but in changing attitudes with the ultimate objective of changing the system.

Independent Journalism: "Society Itself Decides"

Glasnost is published monthly from Moscow, also in French and English editions abroad. The project's tiny budget and rigid state controls on printing equipment limit the Russian edition to 200 initial copies; every subscriber assumes the obligation to duplicate up to 20 bootleg copies and pass them on; later links in the chain do likewise.

Mrs. Grigoriyants says the three-year old magazine has "opened the frontiers of glasnost for the official press" by daring to break the silence on issues such as the political abuses of Soviet psychiatry, which the mainstream press then quickly begins covering as well.

Paul Quinn-Judge, Moscow correspondent of the Christian Science Monitor, told us he believes the USSR's 700-plus unofficial magazines and newspapers are heading for an identity crisis as the official media become so open that the "unofficials" are crowded out of their niche. But Mrs. Grigoriyants rejoins that the proportion of lies in the official press is still about 25%, rendering the whole thing unreliable. She complains that the Western news media, almost without exception, have become dangerously unskeptical of the Soviet media of late.

The Grigoriyants and their staff also publish Daily Glasnost, a newsletter. Alexander Podrabinek of Moscow puts out a kindred weekly, Express Chronicle, covering human rights, political and economic reform, and other subjects which even the new Pravda tends to scant. Victor Okschuchiets and Choice magazine specialize in religious freedom. So it goes, not only in Moscow and other big cities but out to the farthest corners of the 15 republics -- free pens, not yet proven mightier than the Leninist sword, but steadily adding readers and gaining nerve.

The leaders have good access to the West; Sergei Grigoriyants was away on an extended trip to Western Europe and the United States during our visit to Moscow. He will be back in December for the third annual conference of the Union of Independent Soviet Journalists, an organization he formed and chairs.

Church Renewal: "The Importance of Christianity for Democracy"

Victor Popkov, like Sergei Grigoriyants, pursues a vocation in which jail is an occupational hazard. He is a man of God, one of that minority of Russian Orthodox priests who refuse to play along with their church's subservient relationship to the Communist oligarchy, and for this he served a two-year prison term under Brezhnev and Andropov.

Father Popkov is now associated with another former prisoner of conscience, Father Gleb Yakunin, released by Gorbachev in 1987, on the executive committee of a nationwide movement known as Church and Perestroika. Their mission is to work in small faith groups to re-energize not only Orthodox believers but those of all religious denominations, and to maneuver institutionally for the eventual complete disengagement of church and state.

The American guest, having seen Moscow's empty meat markets, felt honored but a little unworthy as Popkov's wife and daughter served roast lamb and beef to a crowded table of relatives and friends in their little flat while he explained the inevitability, at present, of some religious engagement with political issues. Beyond the unreliable thaws and bureaucratic concessions cyclically granted believers since Lenin's time, Yakunin's movement seeks "the framework of a whole new approach to religious law," our host said.

Popkov is politically pessimistic for the short run, expecting Soviet life to become somewhat harsher whether Gorbachev survives in power or not. But Vladimir Burtsev and Andrei Bessmertny, two lay members of the executive committee of Church and Perestroika who joined us that evening, emphasized the long-run leavening effect of their organization's work. "Russian Orthodox people have become Sovietized" over the years, Bessmertny commented. "They need to be shown the importance of Christianity for democracy. Even our democrats do not yet recognize that an open and tolerant political order like America's is rooted in spiritual values."

Reopening churches against the resistance of local officials who reply "over my dead body" to the Kremlin's new line of tolerance, circulating Bibles, and restoring integrity to a priesthood and hierarchy riddled with stooges -- those are the getting side of Church and Perestroika's redemptive agenda for this vast piece of Christendom that marked its millenium in 1988. But Bessmertny's statement makes it clear there is also a giving side worthy of Western assistance -- the slow but vital work of cultivating among the Russians and other Soviet peoples a new level of moral and spiritual consciousness fitting them for stable self-government.

The Nationalities: "We Want Our Land Back"

One learns to say Soviet peoples, plural, after a few days' exposure to the more than 100 major nationality groups in this last of the great multinational empires. Our itinerary did not include the most explosive areas of ethnic turmoil -- Armenia, Georgia, Moldavia, the Ukraine, or the Baltic republics -- but even in

once-sleepy Uzbekistan we saw evidence of the surging ferment which threatens to transform if not dismember the shaky federation that Lenin and Stalin cobbled together between 1920 and 1940.

Are Islamic culture and religion given full scope by the Communist regime? Our Intourist guide from Moscow, a Russian, said yes. Muso, the Moslem guide assigned us in Samarkand, said definitely not.

Birlik, a protest group formed recently to agitate for Uzbek rights, was condemned as "inflammatory" by a Russian municipal councilman in Bukhara. But we heard the same organization praised as a "noble, harmonizing" influence by a sophisticated Communist lawyer of Uzbeki extraction who briefed us in Tashkent.

Miriam Andreyeva heads the Uzbekistan chapter of a nationwide, semi-official organization called Memorial International, devoted to "preventing the revival of Stalinism and promoting reconciliation among all nationalities in the USSR" and governed by a prestigious board ranging politically from Yigor Ligachev to Andrei Sakharov. A Bukhara editor, Dmitri Vlasov, brought her to our hotel after one of our group, a black woman who serves in the Georgia House, intrigued him by remarking in an interview that in her opinion the U.S. treats minorities less fairly than the Soviets do.

The fallacy of moral equivalence between the two superpowers seemed depressingly persuasive to some members of our 13-state tour group on this and other occasions during the trip; of which more later. But Andreyeva and Vlasov did listen politely to contrary testimony from others in the American delegation, including an Hispanic mayor and a businessman who has watched the rise of Vietnamese immigrants in his community.

Stalinism's bitter legacy among the Soviet nationalities was impressed on us later that week in Tashkent when we met with representatives of two aggrieved minorities. Galina Seionova is a hospital administrator who with her husband and six Jewish family members has been waiting 10 years for a visa to emigrate to Israel. Fuat Ablamitov is a neurologist who serves on the board of the Crimean Tatars National Movement, working for repatriation of his 500,000 countrymen to their homeland on the Black Sea from which they were forcibly deported in 1944.

Dr. Ablamitov was one of several thousand Tatars fired last year for participating in a supposedly legal strike to dramatize their people's cause. "They label us extremists," he said, speaking nervously through a government interpreter, "but all we want is to get our national land back." The Tatars' fight will soon enter a new stage, either towards redress or stronger protest, because a special commission of the Supreme Soviet is to rule on their grievances by December 31.

"The Baltic model" was one Uzbeki official's term for this fast-spreading Soviet phenomenon of aroused national consciousness leading to human rights demands and democratic pressures. He spoke the phrase as if it were the name of a disease virus, and indeed so it must seem to the harassed Great Russian protectors of a collapsing status quo; no one we met even pretended to know the cure.

Political Organizing: "One Has to Believe"

Unless the cure is in the virus itself. Such seemed to be the conviction of the most coolly passionate and principled of all the Soviet freedom workers we met, Ekaterina Podoltseva of Leningrad. For the past two years, since quitting her job as a math teacher, she has been a fulltime, unpaid political organizer for the Democratic Union.

"The Democratic Union is the party of opposition to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to the totalitarian system in our country; we seek to establish democracy in the USSR nonviolently," the tall, intense brunette explained in a deep voice to match her Marlene Dietrich looks. There are both legal and cultural obstacles to the emergence of true political parties in the USSR at present, she added, but their group seeks to develop at least the possibility.

Podoltseva ekes out a living on money from her parents and her ex-husband. Three times in the past year she has been jailed on technical violations of the meeting-permit law. The 15 days of administrative detention-without-trial are served in the same prison where Vladimir Ulyanov (with studied contempt she calls Lenin by his pre-revolutionary name) was once held by Czarist police. Each time she hunger-strikes rather than touch the "unspeakable, unimaginable" food.

Her daughter Elizabeth, 15, was helping translate our conversation but leaves the room to see to her pet rat, sick all weekend; we ask what toll the mother's work takes on the girl. "She understands we must do this, we have no choice. Rationally one cannot believe we will succeed. Yet one has to believe."

The Democratic Union is small but vigorous, active in many parts of the USSR. Podoltseva shows us the poster she uses in her sidewalk outreach work, pamphlets, a complete directory of the group's Leningrad membership, a printed report on the recent conference of a dozen democratic organizations, a copy of their newsletter Constituent Assembly.

"Our principle is Gandhism, nonviolent resistance," she emphasizes. On that principle the Union is now campaigning for a voter boycott of the local and regional elections Gorbachev will hold across the country early next year, arguing the process is so stacked it should not be dignified by citizen participation. They do this knowing how unpopular the boycott may be; but this is the approach that worked for Gandhi.

Podoltseva and her colleagues warn the Western visitor to listen more closely to President Gorbachev's speeches. "He never calls for democracy, only for democratization," she jabs. A former Komsomol member who turned from Marxism while studying at Leningrad State University, she argues that democratizing communism is impossible, contradictory; one or the other must prevail.

Asked how the West could help her cause, she frowns: "Our people must build democracy by themselves. But it would be very useful for our young people to come to your country and see how democracy works. Or for your youth to come here and live together with ours in a camp for two weeks, four weeks, not just a few days."

A catastrophe must probably overtake our system before it can be reborn, the Russian woman says softly as the visitor rises to leave, "but we hope to soften the blow by the kind of structures we are building."

Labor Organizing: "Educating the People to Stuggle"

Kiril Boldovsky takes a less catastrophic view of the Soviet future, though he is equally certain that communism is dead and, if anything, even more methodical and driven in his determination to see it replaced with freedom.

The 26-year-old father of one gets his olive skin and dark eyes from a Gypsy grandfather. His degree in nuclear physics has led only to a bricklayer's job, due to political reprisals. His union organizing skills are freshly honed by a visit with Adam Michnik and other Solidarity leaders in Poland last April.

Boldovsky is chairman of the Leningrad region's newly formed Union of Workers Committees, an umbrella group linking maverick labor committees in 15 major factories. He is also an active member of the Democratic Union; its larger and less radical counterpart, the Popular Front; and the International Society for Human Rights, a watchdog group that reports violations to Glasnost, Express Chronicle, or Western media that can publicize them. Blatant violations of human rights have dropped off under Gorbachev, he notes, but there has been an increase in the small cases with lesser harassing punishments, often meted out in the workplace.

Boldovsky sympathizes with Podoltseva's election boycott, but disagrees with her about it; in fact he might become a candidate himself. Most of his energy is poured into labor organizing, however. Repealing Article 6 and dethroning the CPSU is obviously necessary, the young strategist says, but that cannot be the first target. "Most people are worried about the meat shortage, low pay, poor housing. We must orient ourselves to the tasks that come from below."

"To the average worker, one more ruble of wages is better than a thousand words about politics," agrees Alexander Smirnov, an interior designer to whose studio Kiril and I have come in Smirnov's Lada sedan, a passable Soviet-made copy of the VW Rabbit. Over Saturday afternoon tea, the American learns that our host is head of the international department of the Union of Workers Committees.

Boldovsky grins sheepishly as he relates this, apologizing that it sounds pretentious for a month-old organization with nothing like the AFL-CIO's membership. It does, a little, but every revolution has to start somewhere -- and Smirnov has in fact been to Tokyo recently for consultations with an official of the International Labor Organization.

He breaks out a bottle of homemade strawberry wine to welcome two more guests: Nikolai Chevalkov, a Communist on disciplinary report who heads the workers committee at the huge Baltic Shipyard, and Vladyslav Milutin, UWC committee head at an electronics plant.

Chevalkov describes the workers' bill of demands recently filed with management at the hazard-ridden, century-old shipyard. The stocky electrician, nicknamed "Walesa" by his co-workers in honor of another shipyard electrician who made good, became radicalized several years ago after the bosses reduced the disability benefits on his partial blinding in a job accident. Now Nikolai's pay is being docked again in displeasure at his organizing activities.

He says the Baltic Shipyard administration is considering the union demands, and that satisfaction has been promised in 60 days; otherwise many of the facility's 13,000 workers will go out on strike.

Suppose the demands are met without a strike, the visitor asks; would your movement then subside? Smirnov: "More demands would follow. Our basic task is educating the people to struggle, and that will continue. We start with economic problems because those are closest to the people." Boldovsky: "Gradually the people will begin to understand that they are colliding not with one director or one administration, but with the system. Then we will break the system."

The UWC directorate is surprisingly unisolated. Besides Kiril's trip to Poland and Alexander's to Japan, they have recently met with a U.S. State Department labor expert visiting from Washington, and they communicate openly with members of the American consulate staff in Leningrad. Yet they are hungry for additional knowhow and advice from abroad. They need a direct contact with the AFL-CIO and other Western labor federations. When told of a forthcoming training mission by American political campaign consultants to several cities in Eastern Europe and the USSR, they begged for details.

A Support Strategy with Four T's

Generalizing from our interviews with activists on various fronts in the Soviet freedom movement, the question about appropriate forms of nongovernment assistance from Americans can be answered in terms of a package of four T's -- travel, training, transfer of skills, and tools for outreach.

Consorting with Western visitors, at least while the glasnost climate lasts, is no problem as our experience shows. Nor are there legal difficulties with going abroad; in addition to the examples given, Victor Popkov had recently been to Britain and the Philippines, Ekaterina Podosltseva had been cleared to attend a conference in Italy in September until an unrelated arrest kept her home, and even the refusenik Seionov family was allowed to visit Israel this summer.

Financial obstacles to foreign travel can be all but insurmountable, however. On Aeroflot, even after the fare in rubles is scraped together, waiting periods for reservations out of the country can reach one year or more. Pan Am and other Western airlines serving the USSR do have seats available, but the nonconvertible ruble leaves few Russians in a position to make the required payment in dollars or equivalent hard currency.

Once the venue for interaction is decided, whether in the Soviet Union or the West -- and over the long term a mix is desireable, since both ways have their distinct advantages -- it requires only a little imagination for the typical executive of a nongovernment organization in this country to look around him and discover that we Americans are awash with in-kind resources of training, skills transfer, and outreach tools that are all but priceless over there.

Inventorying these resources, the American realizes that their richness, variety, portability, and relative cheapness would translate into vast, immediate utility for the kinds of freedom activists profiled in the foregoing sections.

These resources are politically potent in terms of the leverage they can provide for Soviets involved in attitude-changing and rule-changing activities, yet they remain diplomatically benign so long as the source is nongovernmental. Pricing out such an aid package, you find that virtually the only cash outlay, and certainly the only big-ticket item, is the plane tickets themselves. The question is not what is needed or what is possible, but simply what are we waiting for?

II. BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN NONGOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN THE U.S. AND USSR

What did the Colorado delegation learn about the institutional base for analyzing and addressing public concerns in the USSR, independent of the Soviet government and Communist Party? Is there any such base? Who are the players? Could these institutions be linked in any sort of partnership with similar groups in the United States, particularly with American public policy think tanks?

The operative words here are "institutional" and "independent." The author, after several years directing a state-based think tank and collaborating with Washington-based ones, was accustomed to a clear division of roles between those organizations such as parties and lobbies which run candidates and engage in governance, on the one hand, and those which confine themselves to policy analysis, issue advocacy, and public awareness, on the other hand. In the Soviet Union we encountered no organizations of the latter type whatsoever.

The rudiments of an open, participative political order are still in the very early stages of being invented over there. The old rules have not fully yielded -- and as emphasized in the preceding section it is still far from clear that they will yield -- and the new rules are emerging in such ad hoc fashion that Communist officials on two occasions asked our group of legislators and mayors for suggestions on how to run an election.

In this climate, many distinctions familiar to Americans are blurred or non-existent -- news and opinion blur together in journalism, private and public control blur together in the new business cooperatives as well as in the much-discussed, fledgling Soviet philanthropic sector, while the play of ideas and the pursuit of votes blur together on the chaotic frontier of political activism.

So exploration of the possibilities for building bridges must begin with the recognition that any potential partners on the Soviet side are unlikely to be very well institutionalized as yet, and that such partners even when avowedly independent of state and party cannot avoid being subject in some degree to their all-pervasive influence. For these and other reasons, American public policy entrepreneurs should not expect to find mirror images of themselves waiting to launch joint ventures on a handshake.

Encouraging the Open Market in Information

With this understood, however, Westerners face a tremendous opportunity in the fact that Russia is more open to the free play of ideas today than at any time since 1917. Though economic liberalization of goods and services is preceding very slowly and may now even be receding, the Soviet Union does appear to be moving toward an open market in information.

Even government journalists such as Dmitri Vlasov, deputy editor of the party newspaper Soviet Bukhara, and Anna Yermolenko, a reporter for the American service of Radio Moscow, told us of the vastly increased freedom they enjoy in news coverage and editorializing. Beyond this, of course, there is the unofficial press, 700 strong and growing daily.

None of the freedom groups profiled in the preceding section is without its newsletter, and some publish more substantial periodicals as well. Nor are public meetings and conferences as difficult to convene as they were before 1985, either

in terms of logistics or of what can be discussed (Ekaterina Podoltseva's repeated arrests stem partly from her group's Gandhian disregard of the meeting-permit law).

All this is a manifestation of glasnost, the Russian word usually translated as openness, but which we might more usefully render as opening, to remind ourselves that it is not a realized fact but a dynamic and still tentative process with no guarantee of continuation or permanence.

How long will the opening continue, how far will it go? The answer is largely in the hands of the Soviet people themselves, but we in the West can exert a least a marginal influence; that is what this whole report is about. Our vision and boldness may actually be able to help give institutional substance to the proto-organizations of civil society and political change across the USSR, may help strengthen their shaky grasp on real independence from state and party.

Publicizing Names and Pairing Organizations

The first step could be a systematic effort to impress specific names of Soviet citizen activists upon public consciousness in the West, so that any future persecution of those individuals or suppression of their groups would come at the cost of that international disapproval to which the Kremlin leaders are so sensitive.

Such names, along with addresses and phone numbers and other pertinent details, are readily available from the World Without War Council in Seattle or Freedom House in New York, both of which assisted our delegation in preparing for the October trip, and from other sources such as the American Foundation for Resistance International, Vladimir Bukovsky's organization, and the Center for Democracy in the USSR, publisher of the American edition of Glasnost.

Massive and sustained publicizing of those names would be simple to achieve as more and more nongovernment organizations in this country took up the project, and its value can hardly be overstated.

The next logical step might be the pairing of policy organizations in this country with roughly comparable entities over there. Thus the Independence Institute of Colorado or the Mackinac Center of Michigan might work out some sort of linkage with Leningrad's Union of Workers Committees and the Democratic Union (see page 9).

The Columbia Journalism Review or National Review might explore ways to partner with Sergei Grigoriyants at Glasnost, while the Newspaper Guild established liaisons with his Union of Independent Soviet Journalists (see page 6).

The Sierra Club could link up with any of the fast-multiplying regional or national environmental action groups in the USSR. The NAACP and B'nai B'rith could partner with Memorial International (see page 8). And so forth.

The terms and results of each linkup would vary according to the capabilities and comfort levels of the different partners. But in the aggregate, this pairing process could make an important contribution to the maturing of nongovernment organizations prepared to analyze and address public concerns in the Soviet Union.

Sisters Unequally Yoked

The process would be not unlike the sister/city and sister/state relationships which many American localities have formed with different parts of the Soviet Union. In Bukhara and Tashkent, for example, our hosts proudly mentioned their city's sister ties with Santa Fe and Seattle, respectively.

But the drawback to such arrangements between units of government in the two countries, as we will see in the discussion of citizen exchanges in the next section, is that they tend to foster American complacency about the ugly features of Soviet Communism by getting democrats on this side "unequally yoked together" with despots on the other side.

John McLaughry of Vermont, a colleague of the author, describes in a recent article how his state's sister connection with Soviet Karelia blithely ignores the brutalizing of that province after Stalin seized it from Finland in 1940 (Resistance Bulletin, Autumn 1989).

Mayor Linda Jourgenson of Boulder, Colorado, recently set a slightly better example of integrity in such relationships by filing a formal protest with her sister mayor in Dushanbe, Tadjikistan, over reports of anti-Semitic violence there. But she added that the action "does not mean we're trying to put our values on them" (why not?) and that the city will not suspend this sister relationship as it has done for the one with Lhasa, Tibet, where Beijing enforces martial law (Denver Post, November 27, 1989).

Thus even here the fundamentally unserious character of such feel-good ties is evident. A case can be made that it is not merely Jewish human rights but the human rights of all citizens which are intrinsically and chronically violated by the Marxist-Leninist regime -- that the USSR is "a prison of peoples whose entire history since 1917 has been a criminal affair," as we were told by the American scholar Alexander Gordienko in Leningrad. What kind of sisterhood can any community of free people in good conscience pledge to the municipal or republic-level sub-wardens of such a prison?

Problems of this kind do not arise in the pairing of nongovernment organizations, provided the Soviet partner is carefully scrutinized for hidden entanglements with repressive officialdom, entanglements like the ones which have tainted the American Bar Association's links with the Soviet lawyers guild and those of some American associations of health professionals with their opposite numbers in the USSR.

Professor Roy Godson, a Sovietologist at Georgetown University, notes that "since the 1920s the Soviet government has all too often used supposedly independent organizations for official purposes." His article, pointedly entitled "How to Tell a Soviet Non-Governmental Organization from a 'Front'," appeared in the September-October 1989 edition of Philanthropy and is reprinted as an appendix to this report.

While it is understandable that many Americans are becoming "intrigued by the possibilities of a viable non-governmental sector in the USSR," Godson warns, "it is only prudent that [they] should be critically equipped to appraise these new Soviet institutions."

Farming on the Moon?

The lack of prudent and critical appraisal strikes a jarring note in such otherwise hopeful -- and presumably very influential -- documents as "Soviet Philanthropy: USSR Builds on New Foundations," Rushworth M. Kidder's long article in the Christian Science Monitor of August 24, 1989, and "Marx and DeTocqueville: The Emerging Charitable Sector in the Soviet Union," the in-house report of the Council on Foundations written by its president, James J. Joseph, after a March 1989 trip to that country.

These two pieces, each several thousand words long, mention communism and the Communist Party a total of only five times between them. Even those few references are merely in passing -- so that the authors end up providing no analysis whatever of the potential abuses, deceptions, and hidden influences noted by Godson and obvious to anyone with a passing knowledge of Bolshevism's modus operandi over the last seven decades.

Meaning no disrespect to Messrs. Kidder and Joseph, one is tempted to say that publishing a survey of philanthropic frontiers in the USSR today without addressing the subtle and tenacious penetration of communism throughout that society is an oversight as fantastic as issuing a prospectus for farming on the moon which says nothing about the absence of air, water, and organic life on that body. It is not reassuring as to the two authors' political sophistication.

Western donors of funds or other aid who would venture onto the Soviet scene with no better guidance than this, run a high risk of pouring their precious water (for which so many ex-communists and anti-communists in the bonafide freedom movement are so thirsty) into the sandy moonscape Andrei Sakharov warned about.

For that matter, not even the involvement of a world figure and genuine democrat like Sakharov may be sufficient to validate the independence of such impressive-sounding entities as the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity, which is favorably discussed in both the Council on Foundations and Monitor pieces. Academician Sakharov indeed sits on the IFDSH board, along with 30 other directors of the stature of Apple's John Sculley, but the chairman is one Yevgeni Velikhov.

James Joseph identifies Velikhov as a leading Soviet scientist, Rushworth Kidder says he is a senior adviser to Gorbachev, all correct as far as it goes, but Godson adds the detail that "he is now a member of the CPSU International Policy Commission, which oversees the Soviet active measures apparatus which includes disinformation and deception operations." Interesting.

IFSDH has offices in New York, San Francisco, and Stockholm. It will spend about $2 million and two million rubles annually. The initial stake of rubles came from the Soviet Peace Fund, Kidder reports without comment. Again one must turn to Godsen to learn the the Soviet Peace Fund has the government's sanction, is "well known for front activity," and "also financially supports 'national liberation movements' as well as Soviet allies."

Another name on Kidder's roster of IFSDH directors is Metropolitan Petirim, Russian Orthodox bishop of Moscow. James Joseph writes glowingly of his meeting with Petirim, who he says "is not about to be restricted" in expanding the full range of church activities. The leaders of Church and Perestroika, however, regard

this particular cleric as one of the worst of the CPSU's tame pets. Andrei Bessmertny (see page 7) showed me an article excoriating Petirim which he wrote for the next issue of the Yakunin group's newsletter.

Guides and Maps and Values

From all this it seems clear that what you see, what you learn, and whom you meet on a visit to the Soviet Union may differ radically according to who your guides are. The choice of guides, in turn, will depend on which map of political, social, economic, and cultural reality in the USSR one is inclined to accept.

In some degree this is a truism for any kind of foreign travel and intercultural contacts, but in the case of the Soviet Union a special degree of caution is required. This is the society, after all, which invented long before Lenin's time those phony showplaces called Potemkin villages, and which has embraced under Lenin and his heirs a self-contained alternative system of moral values and word meanings which simultaneously inverts and mimics all the Judeo-Christian concepts of truth and right that Americans take for granted.

So the USSR remains a dangerous place for the unwary, perhaps all the more so now that the winds of change under Gorbachev are fanning the flames of wish-fulfillment for many Americans. To write of "the ongoing privatization of the Soviet economy" as Kidder of the Monitor does, as if the regime were far along in a market reform process it has barely toyed with and is now retrenching from, is startlingly bad mapmaking.

To quote a Soviet academician who remarked "it was too bad that Marx did not read deTocqueville" as the president of the Council on Foundations does, as if the angry German genius would have scrapped Das Kapital at a word from the open-hearted French count, can only result from a most naive choice of guides. It bespeaks a level of fatuity about human nature and the history of ideas that is unsafe in any position more responsible than mayor of Boulder.

Safer guides and truer maps are available. World Without War Council in Seattle, for example, can be reached at 206/523-4755. Staffers Holt Ruffin and Richard Upjohn can enrich your itinerary with a "reality element" as they did ours, drawing upon their computerized Database of Independent Contacts in the Soviet Union with only a few hours' turnaround.

Or Kiril Boldovsky of Leningrad, to select only one name from the many we have profiled in this report, can be reached at 130-4978; call through an AT&T operator and add eight hours to New York time. Boldovsky has ties to at least four important freedom groups (see page 10), and welcomes calls from the West literally around the clock.

III. CITIZEN EXCHANGES: WHAT THE WALL CAN TEACH US

What did the Colorado fact-finding delegation learn about the growth potential for citizen diplomacy between the United States and the Soviet Union? What steps could encourage better understanding between the two peoples? Can citizen exchanges help to nurture glasnost at the community level in the USSR?

This cluster of questions, like the previous one, requires clarification of several key terms. What precisely is meant by "diplomacy," "exchanges," "better understanding," and "glasnost at the community level"? But before probing this terminology, we should consider a simple lesson dramatized by East Germany's historic decision to open the Berlin Wall.

For several decades until November 9, 1989, visits by East German citizens to the free West or even to some of their own Communist neighbors were under strict government control or outright prohibition. "Exchanges," in the sense of restricted, packaged, and supervised trips out of the cage, were meaningful in that context. For sundered Berlin families on opposite sides of Checkpoint Charlie, the occasional humanitarian exchange was like a shaft of sunlight beaming into a dungeon and then quickly cut off again.

But since November 9, "exchanges" are a completely moot subject in that country, a concept mercifully emptied of meaning by the political transformation which people-power has forced upon the GDR. All Germans both East and West may now come and go as they please, within the normal bounds of routine legalities.

The lesson: Exchanges across closed borders are better than nothing, they can be managed relatively well or poorly; but as symptoms of a political arrangement which denies human rights, exchanges are in principle repugnant to a free society, whose ultimate objective in exchange policy must always be open borders and unrestricted travel.

Toward Routineness

As already mentioned, many of the Soviet citizens we interviewed were familiar with travel to the West. But they represent the lucky, tiny few. Not even all of our Intourist guides -- fluent in English, suave in dealing with foreigners, and relatively well-paid -- had ever been outside the fence of what Alex Gordienko calls "this prison of peoples."

The combination of red tape from a distrustful government and low pay in worthless currency from a failed economy keeps most Soviets at home. "Home" means close to home, as you realize when a Kiril Boldovsky shows you his internal passport with the city of permanent residence stamped inside, when he describes the closed zones extending as much as 100 kilometers inside the Soviet frontier. And an Alex Gordienko's rhetoric does not seem so exaggerated when you learn that he served three years in labor camps for trying to leave the country without papers in 1961.

Not just the theoretical possibility of travel or the pathetic dribble of real opportunities to travel, but the routineness of permissible and affordable traffic across peaceful boundaries -- this is what our contacts insisted must be the goal. "Exchanges are not enough, the coming and going must be routine," Father Victor Popkov sharply corrected me when I offered to help contact American religious bodies about an exchange of delegations with his group, Church and Perestroika (see page 7).

Diplomacy and Understanding Won't Solve the Real Problem

As for citizen diplomacy and better understanding between the two peoples, without meaning to pick at the choice of words in which these questions were couched, we would suggest that their thrust is not really on point. Diplomacy is the conduct

of external relations between two countries for the resolution of mutual issues and the internal betterment of each. It will be evident to the reader by now that the viewpoint of this report holds the CPSU and the Soviet totalitarian system largely responsible for the unproductivity of US-USSR diplomacy since 1945.

As we have stated repeatedly, citizens from either side, no matter how well-intentioned, can only hope to improve the relationship by somehow exerting leverage on the ruling clique in the Kremlin -- leverage which first alters the rulers' behavior, then pries them out of power (see Warsaw, Budapest, East Berlin, and Prague), and finally recasts the constitution so the old gang can never again monopolize power.

This formulation of the problem moves our attention away from diplomatic atmospherics -- whether of the living-room variety which the author experienced in Russian homes on his 1989 trip or the summit variety he witnessed as a staffer for the Moscow meeting of Nixon and Brezhnev in 1972 -- and focuses it back on the main theme of our report: how to assist the Soviet freedom movement.

The real problem between the U.S. and USSR is the same as the problem between the Soviet rulers and the ruled. The problem is not misunderstanding, not the cultural gap, not the arms race, not Great Russian expansionism, not American paranoia, not Reaganism or Stalinism. The problem is the Communist system installed by Lenin in 1917 and maintained right down through Gorbachev in 1989. The only meaningful sense in which we can speak of working toward better understanding (other than the eternal need for people in every country to keep expanding their factual and emotional awareness of all other countries) is if we believe that many Americans and/or many Soviets do not now understand what the problem is.

But this writer's considered judgment as a political analyst is that most people on both sides do understand the whole situation quite accurately, in the broad daylight of ordinary common sense. In Boulder and Dushanbe alike, Atlanta and Leningrad alike, the average person on the street knows that freedom works, unfreedom doesn't, a certain measure of security is desirable to hedge the risk, and all the rest is details that can be worked out by their elected representatives, robed jurists, and hired experts. What's to "better understand"?

Consequences from Asymmetry of Responsiveness

A certain loss of clear understanding may actually result from the wholesale promotion of individual or group visits between the two countries by idealistic sponsors with an educated incapacity to remember that the Soviet system is the problem. Let's review the evolving rationale for grassroots interaction in order to see how this unintended result could occur.

A few years ago, when U.S.-Soviet relations were very tense, the exchange enthusiasts argued that it was necessary for ordinary people on both sides to learn firsthand what decent folks the others were, how much like ourselves, neither wishing to harm the other, then each would rise up and make their respective governments stop the arms race.

Now that tension is lower and self-criticism and restructuring are the order of the day in Moscow, the rationale smacks less of moral equivalence, but it is still flawed. It is assumed that ordinary Soviets will come here, learn that American ways have much to commend them, then go home and pressure their government

to change accordingly. Meanwhile ordinary Americans will go over there, learn that Soviet ways are less commendable but still deserve respect and patience, then come home and pressure our government to help their government transform itself.

The flaw in the logic for the old and new scenarios alike is the assumption that both governments are equally responsive to pressure. In fact the Soviet regime is barely so, and most ordinary Soviets, particularly those selected for American visits by government-influenced programs, are unequipped or disinclined to utilize the few avenues of pressure that do exist for promoting real change.

If this were the only problem, one could still argue that it can't hurt to try. Unfortunately it can hurt. Any citizen exchange conducted under the unrealistic hope of generating reciprocal upward pressure for warmer relations and faster Soviet democratization -- and in the author's observation this describes most exchange programs -- results in a degree of unilateral moral disarmament for the American participants, be they hosts in this country or visitors to the USSR.

Since the reciprocity is an illusion, the energizing of that many more Americans to urge a softer policy upon their own government which does respond when urged, yields a net disadvantage for toughminded U.S. policymaking calculated to protect the West and motivate reform in the East.

The asymmetry of responsiveness in the two systems was never better stated than in former Defense Secretary Harold Brown's lament at the futility of American good-faith gestures in arms control. "When we build, they build. When we stop, they still build," Brown complained. That was in the late 1970s. In the early '80s the nuclear freeze movement made one more valiant try at the good-faith approach, including an extensive get-acquainted campaign of U.S.-Soviet citizen interaction. Ultimately, however, it was not the freeze but the Reagan rearmament and SDI that not only brought the Soviets to the negotiating table but also, arguably, helped put the USSR's economy into extremis and thus launched Gorbachev on perestroika.

Just Another Country?

Consider our own tour group as a case study in the seduction of exchange psychology. The author's Colorado fact-finding team knew what it was looking for; as suggested at the end of Section II, we took care in our choice of guides and maps. But within the larger group of fifty, even though most were professional politicians, there was an amazing susceptibility on many people's part to lose focus on the core truth that the problem is the Soviet system, and to regard the place as just another country, more exotic than most, wrestling with bigger difficulties than most, not a very appealing place to live of course, yet peopled with likable and sincere human beings to whom one couldn't help feeling a certain kinship.

The impulse of kinship, the tendency to extend the other person the benefit of the doubt, operated even toward the Communist officials with whom we met in all five cities on the tour -- the voter-wary party boss Alexander Trutko in Bukhara, the earnest legal scholar Kadir Alimov in Tashkent, the poll-taking ideologist Oleg Kuzin in Leningrad, and others.

Despite meaty reading assignments and a curriculum of formal lectures by tour leader Bill Owens, an articulate anti-communist, I would judge that after two weeks in the USSR less than half our group remained free of the illusory hope for reciprocal

upward pressure toward warmer relations and faster Soviet democratization. The other half came home less fortified than ever to support President Bush and the Congress in seeing through to a successful conclusion that free-world leadership commitment which John F. Kennedy called "the long twilight struggle." If this was a victory for better understanding it was a Pyrrhic one indeed.

How Much Truth in Pravda?

Consider, too, that if this could happen even on a tour designed with such a careful eye to political realism, the confusion likely to be engendered by such naive projects as "Soviets Meet Middle America" is far greater. We learned about SMMA not at its home office in San Francisco but at the Moscow headquarters of its Soviet partner organization, the USSR Foundation for Social Innovations.

Marina Paskhina, FSI coordinator of international projects, related how her organization is helping the California-based Center for US-USSR Initiatives "bring a total of 400 Soviets to the USA to visit 300 American communities and live in 500 American homes [resulting in] personal contact with over 100,000 Americans." She gave us a CUUI brochure stating that the Center has also "taken over a thousand mainstream Americans to the USSR" since 1983.

This joint endeavor appears to be going forward with honest motives on both sides, as well as impressive energy and professionalism. For all of the reasons discussed above, however, its idealistic objectives seem certain to fail, perhaps at the added cost of blurring many Americans' clear focus on how to really help the Soviet freedom movement.

The Foundation for Social Innovations is under the wing of Pravda, the CPSU daily newspaper. No real bite for basic political change is likely to result from an exchange program where both the outbound delegations and the inbound itineraries are shaped under Communist Party supervision.

On the American side, the Center for US-USSR Inititatives literature is laced with rhetoric exemplifying the very fallacies we examined earlier -- talk of "non-political people-to-people initiatives and travel that would help reduce world tensions" and "Soviet people at the local level [having] an impact on decision-making bodies at upper levels."

One of the CUUI travel testimonials quotes a California political leader as saying her two trips "fundamentally changed my life [by proving] the futility of creating an enemy where none exists." We submit that foundations and other non-government organizations in the United States are ill-advised to invest time and money in activities which spread such a utopian mindset.

Opportunity Cost of the Shotgun Approach

Is it possible to bypass party and state influence in arranging contacts which are genuinely nongovernmental from the Soviet side and which maintain realistic focus on the centrality of freedom from the American side? Our experience and interviews suggest that it is, but because government control in the USSR remains so pervasive even today, the larger the group the less likely this standard can be met.

Ian Kelly, cultural attache at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, told us that individuals and small groups visiting the Soviet Union can bypass Intourist, the state travel bureau, for many of their tour arrangements. Likewise, it is now possible for one-on-one U.S. visitor invitations to be extended by any American citizen to any Soviet citizen with some routine paperwork through the respective embassies or consulates. At least three Soviet friends whom we met on our October trip will visit Denver on this basis in 1990.

But bringing a group out of the USSR, or sending one in, does require a partner organization on that side, according to Ian Kelly. Selecting a reliable partner raises all of the same concerns as those which were quoted from Roy Godson in Section II. The line of least resistance often leads right back into the thick of party and state influence, as was shown by Mr. Kelly's suggestion that we could get further information on group exchanges from the ubiquitous Yevgeni Velikhov (see page 15), this time in his connection with something called the Center for Soviet-American Programs.

Our last word on large-scale "shotgun" citizen exchanges is that doing them right is so difficult, and the consequences of doing them wrong are so harmful, that it is probably better to concentrate resources on narrow "rifleshot" contacts which have a bigger and more certain payoff toward permanent attitude-changing and rule-changing in the USSR.

As noted in the introduction of this report, everything has an opportunity cost. Even in the unlikely event that the political naivete of the Center for US-USSR Initiatives could be remedied by installing some freedom-minded conservatives in tandem with the liberal peace activists who evidently run CUUI, the end result would be a two-way tour service that was still rather low in productivity according to the kinds of changes a Sergei Grigoriyants or a Kivil Boldovsky insists are needed in the Soviet Union today.

Better to target directly on such leaders and their little cadres of change agents through a "four T's" aid program of the sort outlined on pages 11 and 12. Of course the first T, the one that makes possible all the others, is travel -- but a much more selective and strategic kind of travel (even if broadened to include the imaginative "democracy camps for kids" suggested to us by Ekaterina Podoltseva on page 10) than is usually promoted under the name of citizen diplomacy.

Democracy is the Bottom Line

Nurturing glasnost at the community level, attractive as it sounds, is unfortunately a contradiction in terms. Glasnost remains a top-down program of the 20-member CPSU Politburo, and more specifically of the one man, Mikhail Gorbachev, who has now handpicked most of the Politburo and has centralized more defacto and dejure power into himself than any other Soviet leader in decades.

Now largely forgotten in Gorbachev's immense global popularity is a colleague's appraisal of his track record before taking over the Party in 1985: "Behind the smile he has iron teeth." Those teeth were bared briefly in the Tblisi massacre last April. They are sure to flash again, hopefully not with the ferocity shown by Deng at Tiananmen Square, but that possibility remains.

Glasnost and perestroika have not taken on a life of their own; they could still be cancelled at any moment by the Man with Iron Teeth or by his enemies in the Brezhnev mold or in uniform.

Democracy (not just democratization) is what must be nurtured at the grassroots. Sections I and II are a better description of some ways to do that. Section III in the main has necessarily been a discussion of how not to.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS ON GRANTMAKING IN THE USSR

What did the Colorado fact-finding team conclude about the potential for direct grantmaking by American donors in the Soviet Union? How should it be targeted? What are the mechanics? What precautions must be taken?

The donor, even more than the lender, is never without a waiting line of those eager to accept money. In 1990 the USSR and for that matter the entire Eastern bloc will be hot in Western philanthropy. Nonprofit organizations in the West will also be quick to tailor their project proposals for tie-ins to this visible new cause.

But the question of where to grant and whether to grant at all is not decided merely by the fact that Russia under Gorbachev is hospitable as never before to the ministrations of its own newly unshackled charitable sector and to the assistance of American foundations. It is not even decided by the fact that worthy potential grantees are plentiful and conspicuous in this huge country blighted with socialist squalor and no longer secretive about its woes.

Equally important as a sobering counterweight to both of those novel conditions is the old and perduring fact that the Soviet system at large remains hostile to the private, voluntary amassing and dispensing of wealth, the vary essence of philanthropy as we understand it in a free society.

The Question of Who-Whom

The easy new hospitality certainly creates a more fluid situation for interaction of the two superpowers at levels other than the government-to-government relationship to which we were so long confined. But that structurally ingrained hostility throws an ominous doubt over the scene.

The doubt is this: Will the situation be fluid in favor of the Communists who are maneuvering so desperately to save their power base, or in favor of the democrats (small d, referring to the freedom forces both East and West)? It is a classic who-whom situation -- the Russian phrase, a favorite expression of Lenin's, is kgo kvo -- a question of who will end up using whom.

Is the hospitality, the new open window for Western assistance, to be a point of access for fungible resources (psychological as well as financial) that only helps the Communist oligarchy buy time and reestablish its hostile repression of the private sphere? Or can we find ways to exploit the hospitality as a point of access for leveraged resources helping to depoliticize Soviet life and deinstitutionalize the Marxist-Leninist hatred of freedom?

This is the issue we have tried to raise throughout the report. It is an open-ended question that cannot be answered by formula. Most of the players moving into the field of nongovernment relationships, including those such as the Council on Foundations and the Center for US-USSR Initiatives whom we have specifically criticized, appear to have at least a vague awareness of the who-whom problem.

But it is their vagueness that worries us. We see them responding to the hospitality and the worthiness with a sort of emotional pull that tends to overwhelm their intellectual recognition (such as it is) of the ingrained systemic hostility.

Conclusion

We conclude that direct grantmaking into the USSR by American foundations, corporations, or individuals is appropriate and feasible at this time, provided the "reality map" sketched in the foregoing sections of the report is followed.

We agree with James Joseph that the primary need is not money, even though he was talking about help for the probably overrated Soviet charitable sector and we are talking about help for the freedom movement, something very different. Most of the things the freedom movement needs most urgently, cannot be bought with money inside the USSR. Much of the money a grantor decides to spend is probably better placed with appropriate American and Western intermediaries who can provide in-kind support to designated freedom groups inside the USSR.

Anyway, money grants changing hands inside the framework of a healthy social contract are one thing, whereas transferring the wealth earned in a self-possessed society to enable a self-tormented society to get off the hook seems morally questionable. This distinction goes back to the caution we expressed in the introduction against perverse interference with the dynamic of rebirth in Soviet society -- admittedly not a quantifiable notion but still, we believe, a valid one in the long perspective of history.

To recapitulate the principal recommendations of the three preceding sections:

I. Grantmaking should be targeted specifically on those organizations and activities representing the seminal forces of change toward a genuinely free political and economic system in the Soviet system. Activities of a more general social and cultural benefit should not be a target of Western grantmaking at this time. Assistance to freedom groups should aim at providing a package of four T's -- travel, training, transfer of skills, and tools for outreach such as PC's, printing equipment, and fax machines.

II. Grantmaking should also be targeted to encourage U.S. public policy institutes, journalistic organizations, and citizen advocacy groups in bridge-building with their Soviet counterparts. The names of Soviet freedom activists and of their organizations should be publicized in the West as widely as possible. Formal pairing of Western and Soviet groups should be encouraged, taking care to avoid legitimizing Communist Party front groups on the Soviet side. Pairing with official or semi-official Soviet organizations should be undertaken cautiously if at all. Sister-government relationships should not be supported.

III. Citizen exchanges are generally not a productive investment of resources, and can even be counterproductive in terms of American clarity about how best to support permanent change in the Soviet Union. If attempted, exchanges should focus on individuals or very small groups. The guiding philosophy of any exchange, carried out in staffing, activity programs, and explanatory materials, should be a conscious commitment to freedom advancement, not merely intercultural familiarization and friendship. Resources have far greater leverage when devoted to making the Soviet system embrace open borders and unrestricted travel, than when spent on the tokenism and unrealistic psychology of exchange programs.

Critically important in sound grantmaking on the Soviet reform issue is that conceptual framework of assumptions, expectations, and value filters which we discussed on page 16 under the figurative name of "guides and maps." Searching for the one best guide is not so essential as making sure you have a diversity of guides who can provide a check against one another's blind spots.

Grantmakers are well advised to go to extra lengths in ensuring balance among their intelligence sources. Check the perceptions of the Council of Foundations against those of the Philanthropic Roundtable, the organization that published the Godson article (see appendix). Heed the reportage of the Wall Street Journal as well as the Christian Science Monitor. Seek input not only from the Center for US-USSR Initiatives, but also from the Center for Democracy in the USSR (see page 13).

The XYZ Trust, incidentally, set an example of such a quest of breadth for sources by commissioning the Independence Institute to produce the present report.

Sakharov and Hippocrates

The epigraph of this report refers to the sober warning given in a London address last June by the late Andrei Sakharov, whose unswerving leadership of the internal forces opposing Soviet Communism through the years gave him a stature of moral authority unmatched by any contemporary Russian except Solzhenitsyn and a handful of others.

His statement quoted on the cover uses not only the terminology of cultivation but also that of healing, with its reference to treatment for "an ailing system." Thus the Hippocratic injunction against measures that harm the patient instead of helping is worth repeating as we conclude. Dr. Sakharov added in the same speech that ill-considered Western aid to the USSR at this juncture might only work to "drive the illness under the skin, making it impossible to achieve any change."

He insisted that "now is not the time to artificially press ahead with economic, cultural, or political relations." The judgment call is what constitutes artificially, as opposed to prudently, pressing ahead.

Writing in the aftermath of the Malta conference between presidents Bush and Gorbachev, it is impossible to predict how the United States government will come down on that judgment call in the final weeks of 1989, and still more impossible to know how the events of the 1990s will prove out the wisdom or folly of Western policy decisions now evolving.

But thanks to American pluralism, we in the nongovernment organizations can set our own course of prudent response to Soviet reform, regardless of what Washington officialdom does. We should make certain that each act of outreach is designed to water the seeds of democracy and freedom, not the sand of a subtle and persistent totalitarianism.

INDEPENDENCE INSTITUTE is a nonprofit, nonpartisan Colorado think tank. It is governed by a statewide board of trustees and holds a 501(c)(3) tax exemption from the IRS. Its public policy research focuses on economic growth, education reform, equal opportunity, and international relations.

JOHN ANDREWS has been president of the Independence Institute since its founding in 1985. He was formerly a college administrator and a White House speechwriter, accompanying President Nixon to the Moscow summit in 1972. He serves on the U.S. Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Education and is a visiting instructor in the humanities at the Colorado School of Mines. He is the author of the forthcoming book No Weakness No War: Peace and Principle in America's Third Century.

COLORADO POLITICAL STUDY TRIP TO SOVIET UNION

Journal: October 8-22, 1989

What can Americans do to support the Soviet freedom movement? This was the guiding question for Independence Institute president John Andrews on a two-week tour of the USSR, accompanying a delegation of Colorado legislators and political leaders from 13 other states. Andrews sought firsthand information from both Soviet officials and nongovernment sources about political democratization and decentralization, economic liberalization, expansion of what we call First Amendment freedoms, status of nationality issues, growth of the private and nonprofit sectors, and points of entry for nongovernment U.S. involvement with the above. His contacts and those of some other Coloradans are summarized in the following journal:

Monday 10/9 - Helsinki

Briefing by Finnish Foreign Ministry officials.

Tuesday 10/10 - Moscow

Dialogue with committee members of Moscow Communist Party, Kremlin District.

Briefing at U.S. Embassy by Deputy Chief of Mission Michael Joyce, political officers, and commercial officer.

Tea at the home of Andrei Bessmertny, executive committee member, Church and Perestroika movement for freedom and renewal in Russian Orthodox church.

Dinner at the home of Father Viktor Popkov, another leader of Church and Perestroika, jailed for his religious activities under Brezhnev and Andropov.

Wednesday 10/11 - Moscow

Dinner with Anna Yermolenko, reporter for the North American service of Radio Moscow, regarding arrangements for her to be a visiting journalist in Denver, February-May 1990.

Briefing on independent journalism in the Soviet Union, at the home of Glasnost magazine publisher Sergei Grigoryants, by his wife Tamara.

Phone interview with Ian Kelly, U.S. Embassy cultural affairs officer, regarding procedures for U.S.-Soviet citizen exchanges.

Thursday 10/12 - Moscow

Political backgrounder with Paul Quinn-Judge, Moscow correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor, at the foreign news bureaus building.

Meeting at Pravda offices with Marina Paskhina, international projects coordinator of the Foundation for Social Innovations, a new private philanthropic organization in the USSR.

Phone contacts with dissident leaders Larissa Bogoraz, Alexander Podrabinek, Lev Timofeyev; unable to see.

Phone contact with Eduard Kovalyov, press officer for the Supreme Soviet; was offered a journalist pass but no sessions scheduled today.

Dinner with Oleg Galimov, technical institute instructor and English-language tutor, regarding arrangements for him to study linguistics at a university in Colorado or Utah next year.

Friday 10/13 - Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Historical tour of monuments relating to Alexander the Great, the astronomer-emperor Ulugbek, and Moslem heritage in Soviet Central Asia.

Saturday 10/14 - Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Tea with members of a neighborhood Communist cell.

Sunday 10/15 - Bukhara, Uzbekistan

Dialogue with Dmitri Vlasov, deputy editor of the Communist Party newspaper for the Bukhara region, and Alexander Trutko, second secretary of Bukhara Communist Party.

Comparative discussion of U.S.-USSR ethnic and racial problems with editor Vlasov and Miriam Andrievna, Uzbekistan director for Memorial International, an all-union organization working to reconcile nationality conflicts.

Wednesday 10/18 - Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Comparative discussion of U.S.-USSR legal systems with three attorneys: Kadir Alimov, Uzbek secretary of the Soviet Association of Political Science; the chairman of the law school at Tashkent University; and a practicing Soviet barrister.

Breakfast with Dr. Fuat Ablyamitov, member of the executive committee of the Crimean Tatars National Movement, working for repatriation of his 500,000 countrymen to the lands from which Stalin deported them in 1944.

Meeting with a Jewish refusenik: Dr. Galina Seionova, chief physician of a Tashkent hospital, who with her husband and six family members has repeatedly been denied an exit visa for Israel, with no reasons given, over the past 10 years.

Dinner at the home of Mrs. Nelliya Avnunova Bababekova, her parents, two brothers, and their families, to discuss the political, economic, and cultural status of Tashkent's Jewish community.

Thursday 10/19 - Leningrad

Phone contact with Douglas Waite, attache at the U.S. Consulate who acts as liaison with democratic activists in the Leningrad region.

Meeting with Alexander Gordienko, a translator and philosopher who served a prison term in the 1960s for attempting to cross the border to Finland without papers, regarding his plans for a U.S. speaking tour next year.

Friday 10/20 - Leningrad

Dialogue with Oleg Kuzin, first deputy head of ideological department, Lenigrad Communist Party, at Smolny Institute where Lenin instigated the October Revolution.

Lunch with Kiril Boldovsky, anti-Communist workingman who chairs the Union of Workers Committees, is an active member of both the Popular Front and the Democratic Union, and monitors job discrimination for the International Society for Human Rights.

Meeting with Ekaterina Podoltseva, full-time political organizer for the Democratic Union, party advocating nonviolent action to replace Communist rule with democracy in USSR.

Saturday 10/21 - Leningrad

Meeting with council members of the Union of Workers Committees: chairman Kiril Boldovsky, international director Alexander Smirnov, Baltic Shipyard Workers Committee chairman Nikolai Chevalkov (nicknamed "Walesa" since he is an electrician), and communications director Vladyslav Milutin -- at Smirnov's interior design studio.

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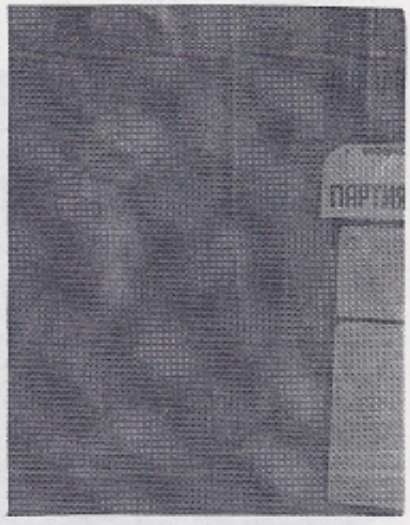

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How to tell a Soviet non-governmental organization from a "front"

Georgetown University professor **Roy Godson** gives some advice

Interest in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is running at an all time high within American philanthropy. Over the past six months, American grantmakers have organized two trips to Moscow in order to observe the "emergence of an independent sector" in the USSR. Articles heralding the changes which are occurring in Soviet society are also popping up everywhere – many reporting on the propagation of a new breed of charitable non-governmental organizations, often referred to by the Soviets as "public" or "societal organizations." And foundations here are becoming inundated with requests for information about the developments behind the Iron Curtain.

Those versed in Soviet history are well aware that since the 1920s the Soviet government has all too often used supposedly independent organizations for official purposes. The new interest in Soviet affairs on the part of American philanthropy has therefore created a pressing need for sound information about the non-governmental sector in the USSR. It is only prudent that American grantmakers intrigued by the possibilities of a viable non-governmental sector in the USSR should be critically equipped to appraise these new Soviet institutions. What follows are five indicators which collectively may be useful to those trying to ascertain whether a given Soviet NGO is really independent or not.

American grantmakers intrigued by the possibilities of a viable non-governmental sector in the USSR should be critically equipped to appraise these new Soviet institutions.

1. Was the organization formed by the Party?

Official control is indicated if the founding members are key Party personalities or individuals who have worked overtly or covertly for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).

One CPSU approach has been to create a "preparatory committee" to oversee a group's establishment. Thus, a committee's membership and meetings can shed light on the nature of the organization. A case in point is the Commission for International Cooperation in Humanitarian Problems and Human Rights, headed by Fedor Burlatsky, a long-time associate of key Party leaders. One Radio Liberty researcher has maintained that the Burlatsky Commission was the "brainchild" of the CPSU's Propaganda Department. He noted that Andrei Grachev, then head of the international information subdepartment in the CPSU Propaganda Department, addressed the Commission's constituent session.

In the year after its creation, the Burlatsky Commission received much positive attention from the official Soviet press. It also was able to obtain official sanction to send delegations to the Netherlands and Vienna, which met with Western governmental officials and human rights groups. It should be noted, however, that immediate national and international attention also may result from official Soviet vilification of an organization.

2. Is the organization granted legal or official status?

Soviet laws and CPSU guidelines also can be an indication of whether or not an organization is independent or controlled. The CPSU has stated its intent to control NGOs. The CPSU statutes (Section VII, The Party and State and Public Organizations, as revised in March 1986 by the 27th Party Congress) state that "party groups" are to be organized in "public organizations" with at least three party members. These party groups will "...pursue the party's policy in the relevant nonparty organizations, to strengthen Communists' influence on the state of affairs in these organizations..., to strengthen party and state discipline..., and to verify the execution of party and Soviet directives."

One indication of the official Soviet criteria for recognizing organizations can be found in the law concerning elections to the new Congress of People's Deputies. Under the law, 750 deputies (one third of the Congress) would represent "societal organizations." Outside of those groups specifically named in the law, e.g. the CPSU, "trade unions," and the Soviet Women's Committee, the only other groups allowed to elect deputies are those "legally constituted" and represented throughout the USSR.

Later the Central Election Commission determined which groups met these criteria as "societal organizations." Among those selected were many well known for their front activity, such as the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, the Soviet Peace Committee, and the Soviet Peace Fund. Other groups such as the Democratic Union were noticeable in their absence. These latter groups often continue to be attacked by Soviet press and leaders as extremist, demagogic, or counterrevolutionary, giving an addi-

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tional indication that they do not have "official status."

3. Who's in charge?

In dealing with a Soviet NGO, Westerners can gain some indication about its independence by examining the careers of the group's leaders. Organizations that are likely to be controlled by the CPSU or used to serve Party objectives have often included senior party or government officials, including former or current intelligence officers.

The Soviet press, for example, sometimes claims it is equivalent to the Western press, and that it does not simply rubber-stamp government opinion. Yet it is headed by senior CPSU officials or those who have worked for the CPSU for most of their lives.

American grantmakers would do well to approach the new "non-governmental" organizations within the Soviet Union with a critical eye.

The International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity has the appearance of being somewhat independent based on the composition of its Board. On the one hand, Andrei Sakharov is a member of the Board, as are others whose presence indicates little if any firm CPSU control. On the other hand, the Foundation's Chairman is Yevgeni Velikhov. He is a vice president of the Soviet Academy of Science and a Gorbachev advisor. In the 1970s he was a key scientist who worked on the development of Soviet strategic defense. He is now a member of the CPSU International Policy Commission, which oversees the Soviet active measures apparatus which includes disinformation and deception operations.

A variant of this indicator is the on-going selection process for the leadership of the group. A closed process, with little internal debate resulting in the selection of prominent CPSU members as leaders would indicate Party control. An open process, including open debate, would be more likely to be used by an independent organization even if Communists are selected.

4. Where does the funding coming from?

Another key indicator in determining a group's true nature is its funding. An organization will need government support to get hard currency. Thus, a group with easy access to hard currency is likely to be less independent than one without.

Funding for many Soviet "societal organizations," including the Soviet Peace Committee, is provided by the Soviet Peace Fund. The Fund also financially supports "national liberation movements" as well as Soviet allies.

Donations to the Fund in the USSR are in rubles. To get hard currency to finance international activities, the Fund needs the full cooperation of the state bank. The bank is very selective providing foreign currency. Even Soviet officials and art... travelling abroad are allowed to obtain only small amounts of currency. This would indicate that Soviet organizations with foreign currency have received Party approval of how the money is to be spent.

5. What are the organization's policy statements, activities, and publications?

A final indication of a particular group's independence is the content of its policy statements, activities, and publications as compared to the CPSU's current policy positions.

The leadership of most "societal organizations" would admit that they follow overall Party guidance. Moreover, Moscow is sometimes careless. *Novosti*, the supposedly independent news organization, advertised its publications in *Foreign Affairs*. However, the address to send orders for this "public organization's" pamphlets is none other than that of the Information Department of the Soviet Embassy. Some *Novosti* "correspondents" even are accredited Soviet diplomats. Moreover, so far, *Novosti* has not published pamphlets of critics of current CPSU leaders. On the other hand, the Soviet press in recent months has presented articles critical of some aspects of Soviet society.

To sum up, the five indicators of Party and government control which have been suggested here are the following:

(1) The degree to which the organization was formed wi... Party and government assistance, and acquired immediate national and international recognition.

(2) Whether or not it met statutory or Party guidelines to obtain "official status," leading to positive official acceptance of the organization.

(3) Whether leaders were selected by the Party, as opposed to being elected by the membership.

(4) The extent to which the organization's funding and foreign currency comes from official sources.

(5) Whether or not its policy statements, publications, and activities support CPSU policy.

Western grantmakers should approach the changes which are taking place within the Soviet Union with caution. Before rejoicing over the emergence of a new independent sector in the USSR, American grantmakers would do well to approach the new "non-governmental" organizations with a critical eye. The five indicators detailed here should assist those interested in separating genuinely independent organizations within the USSR from those that are merely new types of fronts.

Roy Godson is Associate Professor of Government at Georgetown University and Director of the Washington, D.C. ,office of the National Strategy Information Center. A more detailed version this article will appear in the quarterly Soviet Active Measures and Disinformation Forecast.