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Andropov's masterful public relations campaign

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American PR men should have taken their hats off to Yuri Andropov for the masterly way in which he carried out his pre-succession PR campaign in the United States.

Contrary to his predecessors, Andropov ascended the new czar's throne with a sinister reputation — that of a cruel jailer and torturer of millions. It took him just a few weeks to remove these blood stains from his track record.

In May of this year, he left the KGB to become party ideologue and an heir to Brezhnev. In July, a PR campaign designed to convince the world that he is a nice guy was already in full swing throughout the West.

Like the well-attuned components of a symphony orchestra, television

networks and major newspapers ran comments and "reports from our correspondents in Moscow," describing him as a "closet liberal," with a bourgeois penchant for Western suits and gypsy music. For them, Andropov is a man of compassion, although he has increased tenfold the number of psychiatric prisons in the U.S.S.R., in which political dissenters are held.

In 1956, as a Soviet proconsul in Budapest, Andropov lured Hungarian freedom fighters into negotiating with him before crushing them mercilessly. His PR agents have rewritten history, calling him instead a "centrist." That PR campaign was so successful that, even after noted Russian exiles, such as Valdimir Bukovsky, and those Hungarians who once "negotiated" with Andropov, publicly assailed his treachery and

ruthlessness, a former secretary of state and other luminaries continued to swallow it whole.

To be accurate, Andropov's tour de force was nothing unexpected. Under him, the department of *dezinformatsiya* — disinformation — was upgraded to a full "service." The main task of *dezinformatsiya* is to use our free press and free institutions to destroy our society. Furthermore, Andropov has, at his disposal, right here in the United States, a powerful apparatus composed of thousands of paid and unpaid agents.

Sen. Steven Symms, R-Idaho, quoted James L. Tyson, author of *Target America, the Influence of*

Communist Propaganda on U.S. Media (Regnery Gateway, Chicago, 1981), as saying that "there are more than 4,000 full-time paid Soviet propaganda agents inside the United States, spending more than \$250 million a year on anti-U.S. propaganda inside America." "The total magnitude of the Soviet foreign influence operation," according to Tyson, "is estimated to exceed \$3 billion per year."

Who are these agents? Unfortunately, neither the FBI nor the CIA can answer that question. Worse yet, the Soviet war of words is "an effort most Americans do not realize even exists."

But spies do exist. Geoffrey Prime, who was recently sentenced by a British court to 35 years in prison for selling military secrets to Moscow, was recruited by Andropov. How many Primes does Andropov have in the United States? Neither the FBI nor the CIA can answer that question.

KGB spies posing as journalists do exist. In 1980, a French journalist, Pierre-Charles Pathé, was convicted for acting as a Soviet disinformation agent since 1959. A State Department report says, "His articles — all subtly pushing the Soviet line on a wide range of international issues — were published in a number of important newspapers and journals..."

How many Pathés does Andropov have in the United States? Neither the FBI, nor the CIA can answer that question. This is regrettable

because, now with the Vietnam War nearly eight years behind us, it is no longer difficult to distinguish between genuine journalists and phony ones.

KGB-financed newspapers do exist, too. The Soviets have used the Indian news weekly *Blitz* to publish forgeries. One of Andropov's *coups de maitre* was to aid the launching of a mass circulation daily in Greece, *Ethnos* (The Nation) in 1981. Since publication, *Ethnos* has achieved the country's second largest circulation.

Does Andropov have an *Ethnos* in the United States? Neither the FBI nor the CIA can answer that question. Undoubtedly, the United States is the strongest democracy on earth. It is also the weakest one, in light of its self-inflicted inability to cope with the enemy from within.